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Religious Peacebuilders:

The Role of Religion in Peacebuilding in Conflict-Torn Society in Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Scholars and practitioners of International Relations and Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies tend to ignore religion in their analyses due to the considerable influence of the secularist paradigm within these fields. Religion tends to be perceived as a cause of violent conflict, and hence as a phenomenon that must be relegated to the private sphere. However, against these more conventional approaches, some scholars and practitioners have begun to approach religion as a factor that can potentially shape peace and security in positive ways. Within this context, the aim of this thesis is to investigate, as its core question, how Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia.

To answer the research question, the notions of the ambivalence of the sacred (AoS) and the hermeneutics of peace (HoP) are employed as theoretical frames for moving beyond both the core assumptions of the secularist paradigm and analysing local dynamics in the field. These local dynamics are accessed through a qualitative case study methodology with particular reference to the conflicts in Maluku (Indonesia) and Mindanao (the Philippines).

This thesis includes the argument that religion is a resource for peacebuilding through the complex process of the HoP: the process of rereading sacred texts, religious doctrines, and narratives in order to create new, inclusive, and peaceful religious meanings and practices to overcome violent conflicts. The evidence obtained through fieldwork amply demonstrated that religion played pivotal roles in peacebuilding in the two cases that were considered. The HoP process led religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao to perceive religiously grounded peacebuilding as more than simply another tactic to resolve conflict. Rather, peacebuilders in these conflicts became deeply committed to attain peace because for them peacebuilding was a religious conviction, a sacred duty, and a vocation that deserves reward and redemption.

Furthermore, this thesis found that religion could not always be cast as violent, dogmatic, rigid, and inflexible, as the secular perspective has often prescribed. Religion, in fact, inspired and motivated religious adherents to contribute to peacebuilding fluidly, flexibly, and dynamically at local, national, and international levels. Religious peacebuilders worked through official and unofficial religious structures, but they also worked with and drew upon diverse and pluralistic resources of the society, including feminism, nationalism, customary tradition, and the approaches of contemporary civil society organisations. Thus, this thesis demonstrates how religion positively influences peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia.

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This thesis *is composed of my original work, and contains* no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

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Publications during candidature

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Keywords

religion, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, dialogue, interfaith, Maluku, Mindanao, Southeast Asia

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The 9/11 tragedy has, for numerous people, symbolized the emergence of a new form of religious revivalism and extremism at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It has been extremely difficult, especially from a Western point of view, to explain how such barbaric action could occur in a world that was apparently on a path to modernisation and secularization. However, the 9/11 tragedy should not come as a complete surprise if we follow numerous scholars, such as Toft at al., who argued that the twenty-first century is "God's Century."[1] The tragedy was only a manifestation of numerous tragedies that were linked to an instrumentalisation of religion that was connected to the re-emergence of religion in public life, which had been predicted by numerous social sciences scholars in the last two decades.[2] These scholars have questioned the secularization paradigm by which it was suggested that religions would become entirely privatised and disappear from the public sphere.[3]

Despite the dramatic social and political changes that secularism generated, today's world is not necessarily fully secularized.[4] Berger eloquently stated the following:

> [t]he assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today… is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labelled "secularization theory" is essentially mistaken.[5]

Arguably, the strong claims of the secularisation paradigm are not even true for Europe, the birthplace of secularism. For example, some of the EU's 15 member states (Denmark, Finland, Greece, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) have so-called "established churches."[6] In numerous European countries, donations to the churches are tax deductible. Even France, the country that has the extremely strong secular tradition of *laïcité*, despite the current debate on the *burqa*, has

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[1] Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).
[2] See, for example, Peter Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: A Gobal Overview in the Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington, D.C: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999); Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (USA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Craig Calhoun, ed. *Rethinking Secularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: A Gobal Overview in the Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, 2.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Afred Stepan, "Religion, Democracy and the "Twin Tolerations"," *Journal of Democracy* Volume 11, no. 4 (October 2000): 41.

implemented policies that are friendly toward religion,[7] such as the provision of state funds for building mosques.[8]

Furthermore, religion has long been influential and central in the daily life of numerous societies. In the last two decades, some academics have begun to reassess the role of religion in the public sphere. The sociologist Jose Casanova warned of the emergence of "public religions" in the modern world. This notion derives from four developments in the 1980s: (1) the Islamic Revolution in Iran; (2) the Solidarity movement in Poland; (3) the influence of the Catholic Church in the Sandinista Revolution and other political developments in Latin America; and (4) the strong influence of Protestant fundamentalism in US political life.[9]

Throughout Southeast Asian countries, which are the focus of this thesis, a series of developments also demonstrated that religions are not limited to private spiritual matters, as secular theorists had predicted. Religion "went public" and contributed substantially to violent conflicts, as well as to political and structural transformations. The conflicts in Southern Thailand, the Southern Philippines (Mindanao), and Eastern Indonesia (Poso and Ambon), for example, are widely perceived by observers as religious conflicts.

In other instances, religion has been deployed for peaceful purposes. The Buddhist monk Somdet Phra Maha Ghosananda, for example, worked for peace in Cambodia, especially through his renowned "pilgrimage of truth" or *Dhammayietra.*[10] In 1986, Jaime Cardinal Sin, a Catholic Archbishop of Manila led a "People Power Revolution" that forced the President of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos, to resign.[11] In 1998, Muhammad Amien Rais, Chairperson of Muhammadiyah, (the largest modernist Muslim mass organisation in Indonesia with about 25 million members), successfully led *reformasi* rallies to topple President Soeharto who had ruled for 32 years.[12] Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, the Catholic Bishop in Dili (1983–2002) who received the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, became prominent as a leader who strove for peace and justice for the East Timorese, who suffered from brutal military operations.[13] Even in the context of internal political impasses and the ineffective pressure of the international community, Buddhist monks have been among the effectively organised groups that have frequently stood up

[7] Ibid.
[8] See, for example, http://www.observatoiredessubventions.com/2009/les-nouvelles-mosquees-sont-financees-a-30-par-les-pouvoirs-publics, (accessed on 20 November 2010).
[9] Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 3.
[10] Jeffrey Haynes, "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* Vol. 47, no. 1 (2009): 68-71.
[11] The Economist; 7 February 2005, Vol. 376 Issue 8433, 77.
[12] Adam Schwarz, "A Sense of Disgust," *Far Eastern For Economic Review* 1998.
[13] Anthony Spaeth and Michael Creadon, "Prize before Peace," *Time International (South Pacific Edition)* 10 December 1996.

to the military junta in Burma.[14] In other words, religions have played both meaningful negative and positive roles in the public and political affairs in the Southeast Asian region.

1.1 Research Problem and Question

Despite acknowledging the rise of religion in public life, the social science scholars' engagement with religion remains relatively limited because of the influence of the secular paradigm. Yet, secularization is a contested and ambiguous concept in the social sciences.[15] According to Peter L. Berger, the secularization paradigm refers to the intellectual endeavours in the 1950s and 1960s that originated from the Enlightenment. Berger explained that the essence of the theory of secularization is that 'modernization necessarily leads to the decline of religion, both in society and in the mind of individuals.'[16]

Jose Casanova elaborated this notion further:

> [t]he core and the central thesis of the theory of secularization is the conceptualisation of the process of societal modernisation as a process of functional differentiation and emancipation of the secular spheres—primarily the state, economy and science—from the religious sphere and the concomitant differentiation and specialization of religion within its own newly found religious sphere.[17]

This manner of thinking became particularly dominant in social and political analysis. Moreover, in numerous respects, it has come to be seen as the universal and linear path of tradition moving toward modern society and development; from superstition to reason, from beliefs to unbelief, and from religion to science.[18]

Consequently, "the theory of secularization," according to Casanova, 'may be the only theory which was able to attain truly paradigmatic status within modern social science.'[19] The secularist paradigm has influenced both "everyday politics" and academia. In the context of

[14] See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7010839.stm (accessed on 10 December 2010). Ironically, the Buddhist monks in Burma were recently involved in igniting violence against the Muslim minority. In July 2013, *Time* magazine used the picture of Bikkhu Ashin Wirathu, one of the Buddhist leaders in Burma, as the Face of Buddhist Terror for its cover story.

[15] In his recent article, Nader Hashemi emphasized this point by describing three different, but not mutually exclusive approaches to the secularization concept, namely, the philosophical, sociological, and political science approaches. Hashemi also highlighted that, because the concept of secularization has multiple histories, the concept is ambiguous and contested. See Nader Hashemi, "The Multiple Histories of Secularism: Muslim Societies in Comparison," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 36, no. 3-4 (2010).

[16] Peter Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: A Gobal Overview in the Desecularization of the Wolrd: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999), 2.

[17] Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 19.

[18] Ibid., 17.

[19] Ibid., 17

international relations, for example, scholarly attempts to consider religion properly as a critical factor in their analysis, have been, until recently, considerably scant.[20]

The secular paradigm continues to contribute to understanding political dynamics, including those relating to conflict and its management or resolution in numerous parts of the world. However, as I demonstrate in the literature review in Chapter 2, the tendency in International Relations (IR) and the early development of peace and conflict resolution studies (PCRS) fields has been to neglect religion. Such a tendency has been caused by the extremely strong secular tradition in IR and PCRS, in which states are perceived as key actors in managing and resolving conflicts.[21] The recognition of the critical role of non-state actors, such as non-government organisations, civil society groups, local communities, and religious leaders in conflict resolution, has been very slow. Consequently, roles that non-state actors, including religious actors, might play have not been properly considered[22] and intellectual attempts to include religion in IR and PCRS analysis have been limited.

However, in the last two decades, some IR and PCRS scholars and practitioners have increasingly turned their attention to the question of religion. In general, a growing number of intellectual works have tried to include religion and offer analysis of its relation with violence.[23] This constitutes as a remarkable development; yet, the ongoing and generalised persistence of the secularist paradigm confirms that developing more complex and nuanced analyses of religion is a challenge.

To some extent, the negative view of religion is understandable. Over the past three millennia, as Judy Carter and Gordon S. Smith noted, millions have been assassinated in the name of gods.[24] However, two arguments could provide a more balanced and comprehensive perspective on religion. First, one could counter by pointing to destructive "secular" wars and conflicts, including to the millions of people who were killed in secular wars in the last two millennia, and by questioning the effectiveness of secular regimes in preventing genocide, atrocities, ethnic cleansing, and other human rights violations. At least, one could argue that religious factors are not solely responsible for large-scale violence. Second, during the last two decades, attempts have been made to record the positive roles that religious actors played in contemporary peacebuilding and conflict resolution. These attempts, although still limited, have

[20] Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2008), 13.
[21] Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2004), 26-29.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Actually, there has been already significant works on 'religion and violance' even before the 9/11 tragedy and has been substantial increase since then. See Charles K. Bellinger, "Religion and Violence: Bibliography " *The Hedgehog Review* Spring(2004): 111-17.
[24] Judy Carter and Gordon S. Smith, "Religious Peacebuilding: From Potential to Action," in *Religion and Peacebuilding*, ed. Coward and Gordon S. Smith (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004), 279.

shown that religion and religious actors in some circumstances and contexts could be effective peacemakers and peacebuilders.[25]

Despite the recognition of the positive contribution of religions in recent literature, significant research gaps remain. Some of the existing academic works tend to celebrate religion, instead of examining, in depth and detail, how and why religion is crucial for peacebuilding. In addition, scholars tend to make sweeping generalisations by claiming, for example, that 'individuals operating on a religious or spiritual basis are often more appropriately equipped to reach people at the level of the individual and sub-national group than political leaders.'[26] Therefore, I do not want to, and should not, deny the role that religion has in conflict. However, religion should not be naturally associated with conflict. Research is required that provides case studies that include a direct exploration of the local contexts to examine how religion can play positive roles in peacebuilding.

As discussed earlier, Southeast Asia is a "research laboratory" that provides various types of evidence on religion as a public religion. Southeast Asia is also among the homes of religious conflict, extremism, and terrorism. Because public religions and an increase in conflicts that are tinged by religions are presently emerging in Southeast Asia, understanding the role of religion in contemporary peacebuilding and conflict resolution is a critical intellectual challenge. Page: 5 The following question emerges in light of the foregoing discussion: **How do Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia?**

1.2 Theoretical Approach

Research on religion in peacebuilding is relatively new. Consequently, on the one hand, research, to date, suffers from a relative absence of adequate theoretical approaches. On the other hand, the current shortfall in theoretical approaches opens opportunities to improve the understanding of the perspectives and practices of religious peacebuilders. As I demonstrate in the next chapter, most secular work in the social sciences tends to approach religion as a negative influence in conflict. In such discourses, religion tends to be perceived as superstitious, irrational or magical, absolutist and inflexible, traditional and conservative, but also extremist and dangerous. Samuel Huntington

[25] Among others see Muhammad Abu-Nimer, "A Framework for Non-Violance and Peacebuilding in Islam," *Journal of Law and Religion* 15, no. No 1/2 (2000-2001); Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith, ed. *Religion and Peacebuilding* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004); David R. Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2006); "Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding," ed. David R. Smock (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2007).

[26] Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Samson, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 4.

stridently asserted that religion is rigid and inflexible by saying 'Even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arabic and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim.'[27] As such, religion has more propensity, in Huntington's view, to ignite a "clash of civilizations" than secular ideologies and institutions do.

In his landmark book, William T. Cavanaugh eloquently criticised these conventional approaches as the product of the 'Enlightenment narrative that has invented a dichotomy between the religious and the secular and constructed the former as an irrational and dangerous impulse that must give way in public to rational, secular forms of power.'[28] This manner of thinking presents considerable problems for how one perceives the legitimate and justifiable use of violence. In line with Cavanaugh's argument, one might ask whether, after the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which began to facilitate secularism as a new chapter in European history, people really did begin to live in a more peaceful and just world. History demonstrates that secular institutions and ideologies are accompanied by unprecedented violence, atrocities, genocides, and other forms of gross human rights violations—from slavery and colonialism, the First and Second World Wars, to the War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I do not want to be an apologist for religion, which, in human history and in numerous parts of the world, has been associated with significant violence and human suffering. However, I suggest that a new understanding of religion in social science research must be developed, especially in IR and PCRS, to grasp religion as a "normal" social and political phenomenon, rather than an anachronistic phenomenon that will be forgotten.

In this context, Scott Appleby's approach to religion offered a valuable avenue for shaping my theoretical approach because he perceived religion as having two faces: one positive and one negative. Appleby termed this phenomenon "the ambivalence of the sacred."[29] According to this perspective, religious violence is only one face of religion. The goal of the theoretical approach in this research is to reveal the other face of religion to understand the role that religious peacebuilders and religious peacemakers play in resolving deadly conflict. Using this perspective, religious peacebuilders perceive the ambivalence of the sacred more as an opportunity than as a liability.[30]

Unlike Appleby, scholars such Jurgensmeyer believed that religion could only (1) personalize conflict by making it a type of personal obligation that affords personal rewards and redemption.

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[27] Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Council of Foreign Affairs 1993). Can be accessed on http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48950/samuel-p-huntington/the-clash-of-civilizations (accessed on 1 December 2013).
[28] William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence* (New York: Oxford University, 2009), 4.
[29] R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (Boston: Rowman & Litttlefield Publishers, 2000).
[30] Ibid., 281-307.

They also believed that religion could (2) provide a vehicle for social mobilization as well as organisational networks to sustain the conflict, and that (3) it could legitimise moral righteousness and justify violence. Finally, they argued that religion would (4) absolutize the conflict into diametrically opposed positions and help to demonize opponents.[31] The notion of the ambivalence of the sacred provides an avenue to examine religion by taking an approach that contrasts that which Jurgensmeyer outlined. This research includes exploring the potential ability of religion to personalise the process of pursuing peace as a moral and social obligation, because religious adherents often perceived conflict resolution as their sacred duty. Similarly, this research includes an investigation of whether and how religion could be a vehicle for mobilizing people on the path to non-violent coexistence and a tool for demolishing the barriers that stereotypes and prejudices produce during war and conflict.

David Little's hermeneutics of peace (HoP) is helpful in pursuing the reversal that Appleby facilitated. The term hermeneutics is taken from the classical Greek word *hermeneus*, which means an interpreter or expounder,[32] and refers to Hermes, the messenger of the gods of Greek mythology. Hermes 'had to understand and interpret for himself what the gods wanted to convey before he could proceed to translate, articulate, and explicate their intention to mortals.'[33] Historically, hermeneutics was widely used by theologians in the Christian tradition to (re)understand the "real" meaning of the Bible. However, later, scholars began to use hermeneutics as theory and methodological approach in philology, jurisprudence, and philosophy.[34] There has been a heated debate about hermeneutics among scholars of "modern hermeneutics" from Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Dilthey (1833-1911), Heidegger (1889-1976), Gadamer (b.1900) to Habermas (b.1929) and Karl-Otto (b.1922).[35] While I value the work of these hermeneutics scholars, I leave the philosophical debate aside in this thesis to focus, through the HoP, on how and why sacred texts could be used to organise and mobilize for peace.

Learning from twelve case studies of religious peacemakers from numerous parts of the world, Little concluded that the HoP is crucial in determining peacemakers' orientations and activities. He defined the HoP as

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[31] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al-Qaedah.* (London: University of California Press, 2008), 255.

[32] David Jasper, *A Short Introduction to Hermeneutics* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 7. Porter and Robinson explains the term hermeneutics is from the Greek verb *hermeneuein* means to interpret or to translate, see Stanley Porter and Jason Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpetive Theory* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011), 2.

[33] Kurt Mueller-Vollmer, ed. *Texst of German Tradition from Enlightement to the Present* (New York: Continuum, 1990), 1.

[34] Ibid., 2. See also Josef Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as Method, Philosophy, and Critique* (London ; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 1. See Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpetive Theory*, 2.

[35] Mueller-Vollmer, *Texst of German Tradition from Enlightement to the Present*.

> [a]n interpretive framework that begins with the conviction that the pursuit of justice and peace by peaceful means is a sacred priority… Within this framework, particular texts, doctrines and practices contained in one's own tradition—and often in traditions of others—are examined for guidance in the process of elaborating and implementing the fundamental commitment to peace and justice. [36]

One of Little's central points is that sacred texts, doctrines, and practices are crucial for developing the conviction that pursuing peace is central to religion and spirituality. In other words, the HoP process, speaks directly to the ambivalence of the sacred. The case could be, then, that the question about whether religion could be used for peacebuilding depends largely on the HoP process. The HoP concept can be developed further, based on the foundation that Little provided. In this research, Little's broad definition of the HoP provides a guide to investigate the *process* that underpins how peacebuilders use religious resources, including how they mobilize multiple and sometimes competing readings of Biblical and Qur'anic texts for peacebuilding initiatives. I argue that the process of interpreting religion is dynamic and often involves a creative tension when attempting to comprehend religion within a specific cultural and political context.

Furthermore, I utilise Cecelia Lynch's neo-Weberian approach to religion in international politics to develop Little's notion of the HoP further. Lynch approached religion as an interpretive community. In opposing mainstream scholars who see religious doctrines as dogmatic and rigid (unchanging), Lynch suggested looking closely at how religious communities approach doctrines and interpret sacred texts both in normal situations and in the context of violence and crisis.[37] Weber is widely recognised to be a strong advocate of secularism, but, for Lynch, Weber suggested that religious doctrines and actions must be understood in (a) specific context(s) to prevent generalisations and oversimplification.[38]

Similarly to Lynch, William Cavanaugh suggested approaching religion, in his case Christianity, as 'not simply a set of doctrines immune to historical circumstance, but a lived historical experience embodied and shaped by the empirically observable action of Christians.'[39] Following this approach, this thesis employs a HoP approach to investigate the dynamics and process of *religious doctrine in action*: specifically by exploring how 'religious agents employ ethical constructs to determine how to act.'[40] I also examine how Muslims and Christians in Maluku and Mindanao use religious resources (sacred texts, personal faith, religious networks, system of

[36] David Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profile of Religion in Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). 438.
[37] Cecelia Lynch, "A Neo-Weberian Aproach to Religon in International Politics," *International Theory* 1, no. 3 (2009): 382.
[38] Ibid., 383.
[39] Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence*, 5.
[40] Lynch, "A Neo-Weberian Aproach to Religon in International Politics," 383-84.

communications, education and training, schools or *madrasah*, and other religious institutions) through concrete actions to initiate local ceasefires, undertake reconciliation, run peace education training, organise interfaith dialogues, and provide trauma healing.

I should highlight that reversing the secular position of scholars such as Jurgensmeyer does not mean that I argue that religion is wholly positive concerning its effects on conflict. Rather than attempt to engage such a debate, this thesis aims to increase our understanding of religion though the development and application of an interpretive and analytical framework to examine the activities of religious peacebuilders. Through this approach, this project can enhance the understanding of the role of religion in peacebuilding processes.

1.3 Why Maluku and Mindanao?

As I discuss in detail in Chapter Three (Methods and Cases), in order to answer the question that is posited in this research, I employ two case studies: Maluku (Indonesia) and Mindanao (the Philippines). Although the conflicts in Maluku and Mindanao are different in nature, where the people in Maluku suffer because of a conflict that is primarily ethno-religious, whereas Mindanao is affected by a secessionist conflict, one cannot deny that religion has played a significant role in both conflicts. Because the principal objective of this research is to understand the role of religion in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes, the different nature of the two conflicts might help to understand the similarities and dissimilarities of the actions and activities that religious peacebuilders' have undertaken to deal with these dissimilar contexts.

Secondly, both conflicts are at different stages of 'conflict escalation and de-escalation'.[41] In broad terms, the conflict in Mindanao is situated between the peacekeeping and the peacemaking phases,[42] whereas the conflict in Maluku is in the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. This fact enriches the prospects for building an understanding of the role of religious peacebuilders in different conflict settings and dynamics.

Thirdly, both conflicts are occuring in Southeast Asia, a region that is more violent, more potentially fragmented, and more prone to political and religious violence than at any time in its post-colonial era.[43] In order words, understanding the two case studies is central to peace and security discussions in the Southeast Asia region.

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[41] Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (Cambirdge: Polity, 2005), 11.

[42] When I was in the process of submitting this thesis, GPH and MILF signed the Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro. Mindanao, therefore, case can be included in post conflict peacebuilding phase.

[43] Damien Kingsbury, "Introduction," in *Violence in Between: Conflict and Security in Archipelagic Southeast Asia*, ed. Damien Kingsbury (Victoria: Monash University Press, 2005).

1.4 Thesis Outline

I structure this thesis into eight chapters. This first chapter is devoted to introducing this research by outlining the research problem and question, discussing the theoretical framework, including the use of the concepts of ambivalence of the sacred and the hermeneutic of peace, and briefly introducing the cases.

Chapter 2 includes an assessment and review of the prevailing research that is related to this thesis. First, I discuss the complex relation between International Relations (IR), peace and conflict resolution studies (PCRS) and religion. I demonstrate that IR and PCRS scholars began to criticize the traditional theories in IR and PCRS for their inadequacy to explain the re-emergence of religion in public life. In the second part of Chapter 2, I identify and discuss three dominant perspectives on religion, peace, and conflict: the secular-atheist, religious conflict, and religion and peacebuilding perspectives. Finally, I assess the current research on the conflicts in Maluku and Mindanao. In post-conflict Maluku, scholars have begun to consider the role of culture, emotion, and subjectivity including religion in peacebuilding. In Mindanao research on the role of religion in peacebuilding, in contrast to Maluku, has been substantial. Nonetheless, I found that the analysis in the existing research of how religious resources could be used to contribute to peacebuilding is not fully developed.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the methods and cases that I employed in this research. Briefly, the thesis is methodologically qualitative. Library research, in-depth interviews, and participant observation are its foundation; and the multiple case studies approach is employed. In the second section of Chapter 3, I also introduce the Maluku and Mindanao cases. The two conflicts have been extremely complex; they include a deep process of instrumentalising religion that, in turn, provides an opportunity to investigate how Muslims and Christians use their religion to contribute to peacebuilding.

Chapter 4 includes an analysis of the role of official religious institutions in Maluku representing Protestants, specifically, the Protestant Church of Maluku or *Gereja Protestan in Maluku* (GPM), and Muslims, namely, the Indonesian Council of *Ulama* (MUI), *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), and *Muhammadiyah*. Whereas, in the existing literature, scholars tend to either blame the official religious institutions for their involvement in stirring conflict or overlook the roles that religious institutions play in conflict, my research found that both Muslims and Christians played pivotal roles in peacebuilding. They became involved in the process of the HoP, which consists of efforts to identify theological arguments and commitment from the sacred texts and religious narratives to engage in peacebuilding. Christians pursued a formal approach of theological reform to justify theologically their engagement in peacebuilding through the hierarchical and structural religious institution of the GPM. In contrast, Muslims did not have a unified religious institution

and pursued the HoP through a less formal approach. Religious leaders of Muslim organisations engaged in the process of the hermeneutic of peace where they found theological justification to terminate the conflict and become involved in peacebuilding processes.

In Chapter 5, I investigate three micro-cases that demonstrate how unofficial religious institutions in Maluku contributed to peacebuilding. In contrast to the secularist perspectives, which include a portrayal of religion as rigid, doctrinarian, and inflexible, the case studies revealed that the unofficial religious institutions in Maluku worked for peace in pluralistic ways. For example, they engaged in peacebuilding through different institutions (e.g., interfaith organisations and the women's movement). The unofficial religious organisations were also extremely flexible in adopting a secular perspective and the techniques that are commonly used in secular NGOs. Moreover, religions offered a religious understanding that operated in tandem with local custom *(adat)* to promote peaceful coexistence between people across religious lines.

Chapter 6 is devoted to analysing the contribution of religion to peacebuilding in the intractable conflict in Mindanao. In that chapter, I present three micro-cases, namely the Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM), the Nalapaan Space for Peace, and the religious discourse of peace in a rebel movement, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The three micro-cases demonstrated how, in the middle of a "religious conflict," religion could become part of the HoP to motivate and energise its adherents to identify possible avenues to engage in peacebuilding. The religious communities in Mindanao could re-diagnose the prevalent problem of the conflict, which is mutual distrust and animosity between Christians and Muslims. They worked tirelessly to fix broken relationships and break the barriers of segregation at the grassroots level as fundamental requirements to build a sustainable peace.

In Chapter 7, I present the possible theoretical contributions to understand religion and peacebuilding and specifically develop further David Little's HoP theory, which demonstrates how religion could be used for peacebuilding. This involves dealing with internal struggles and creative tensions within religious communities (comprising persons or organisations) in the discovery of religious justifications from sacred texts, rituals, and traditions, to support their involvement in peacebuilding activities. In that chapter, I also demonstrate that developing further John Paul Lederach's pyramid of leadership to identify "a new place" for religion in peacebuilding among the various actors and levels of local, national, and international is part of the process of the HoP.

I conclude the thesis in Chapter 8 by outlining the principal arguments and the significant findings of the research that demonstrate the substantial contribution of religion to peacebuilding in Maluku and Mindanao. I end that chapter by identifying the limitations of this research and making recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Religious Peacebuildrs: Review and Assessment

This chapter includes an assessment of the relevant political science literature, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches that scholars have deployed to understand the place of religion in peace and conflict. Such an assessment helps to define the position of this research within the existing academic work and identifies "academic lacunas" as a point of departure for this research. In turn, it helps to further contextualise the research question for this research: how Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia.

The chapter consists of two parts. The first part consists of a general overview of the existing literature on the position of religion in peace and conflict discourses. I divide the first part of this chapter into two sections. Section 1 includes an overview of the complexity of the relationship between religion and international relations (IR) and peace and conflict resolution studies (PCRS). Religion has long been part of IR and PCRS. Yet, several factors in IR and PCRS have beeb undermining the recognition of religion in these fields. I reveal the reasons why mainstream IR and PCRS tend to ignored religion. Subsequently, I investigate relatively new and critical academic developments within IR and PCRS that present the opportunity to consider religion as a force in resolving conflicts. In Section 2, I examine three perspectives on the relationship between religion, violence, and peace. Identifying those perspectives is crucial to position this research within the broader ambit of the prevailing direction of IR and PCRS research.

In the second part, I turn to assess the existing academic works on the conflicts in Maluku and Mindanao. I investigate how studies in the literature position religion in their analysis. I divide the second part of the literature review into two sections, based on my case studies on Maluku and Mindanao. In general, I found that a secular paradigm provides critical manners of understanding the complex reality of the conflict in Maluku and Mindanao. Yet, the secular paradigm, which still influences scholarly work on Maluku and Mindanao, tends to approach religion only as a negative factor in peace and conflict. However, in the case of Maluku, the changing dynamics of conflict allowed some scholars to begin to perceive the potential contribution of religion to peacebuilding, although the research on this issue is still underdeveloped. The amount of research that has been conducted to examine the contribution of religion to peacebuilding in Mindanao exceeds that which has been conducted on the same topic in Maluku. Yet, as I explain in detail in that section, this research could contribute to overcoming the shortfalls of the existing research.

2.1 Multiple Perspectives on Religion, Peace, and Violence

2.1.1 Religion in International Relations and Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies

International Relations (IR), as a distinct academic discipline, is generally understood to have been formally institutionalised in 1919 with the establishment of the Department of International Politics in Aberystwyth University in Wales.[44] However, Thomas and Lynch have suggested that, along with much conventional IR theory, the formative period of IR is traceable to the much earlier post-Westphalia and Enlightenment periods.[45] During those periods, IR's relationship with religion was complex. On the one hand, theological reflection contributed to the development of IR through Christian ethics by, for example, shaping IR's discourse on "just war," pacifism, and the development of international law.[46] In addition, the construction of (classical) realism, a mainstream perspective in IR, was influenced by St. Augustine, a pivotal Christian thinker.[47] In the contemporary history of IR, scholars claimed that the principal thinkers of the English School in IR,[48] such as Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, belong to the Christian realists[49] grouping that partly contributed to developing an alternative theory of IR, linking metaphysics and international theory, thereby synthesizing faith and reason.[50]

On the other hand, history has shown that dominant discourses and perspectives within IR have routinely suppressed religion. According to Fox and Sandler, IR scholars have shown greater reluctance to consider religion in their analysis than other social scientists have.[51] The other social science disciplines, they have argued further, began to reconsider religion in their approaches much

[44] Andrew J William, Amelia Hafield, and Simon Rofe, *International History and International Relations* (New York and London: Routledge 2012), 10; Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, 34.
[45] See Scott M. Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously," in *Religion in International Relations: The Return to Exile*, ed. Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Cecelia Lynch, "Dogma, Praxis and Religious Perspectives on Multiculturalism," in *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*, ed. Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
[46] Harriet A. Harris, "Theological Reflections on Religious Resurgence and International Stability: A Look at Protestant Evangelicalism," in *Religion and International Relations*, ed. K. R. Dark (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 24.
[47] St. Augustine's thoughts were introduced into IR by a Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, who greatly contributed to development of realism in the twentieth century. See Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 57.
[48] For further reading on the English School, see, for example, Timothy Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (New York: St. Martin's Press in association with St. Antony's College, Oxford, 1998); Barry Buzan, "The English School: An Underexploited Resource in Ir," *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 3 (2001).
[49] See Eric Patterson, *Christianity and Power Politics Today: Christian Realism and Contemporary Political Dilemmas* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2008).
[50] Adrian Pabst, "The Secularism of Post-Secularity: Religion, Realism, and the Revival of Grand Theory in Ir," *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 5 (2012).
[51] Jonathan Fox and Scmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 11.

earlier than IR.[52] Dominant and conventional understandings in IR cannot explain the fact that religion has become increasingly prominent in international politics and national security in recent years.[53] Rather, innovators such as Thomas,[54] Fox and Sandler,[55] Dick,[56] Lynch,[57] Harris,[58] Petito and Hatzopoulus,[59] Pettman,[60] Hurd,[61] and Haynes[62] have begun to engage religion in IR with greater seriousness.

At least four inter-connected explanations are available for the reluctance in the IR field to consider religion. First, the initial history of IR was accompanied by, to borrow Thomas's term, a political myth of the Westphalia settlement.[63] According to the political myth, religion clearly brought intolerance, cruelty, hatred, and political turmoil into international public life.[64] Thomas argued that 'the establishment of the modern state, the privatisation of religion and secularisation of politics arose to limit religion's domestic influence… and end the bloody and destructive role of religion in international relations.'[65] Furthermore, religion, 'must be disciplined by the state—privatized, marginalized, and nationalized—as a form of order and social cohesion, or religion must be overcome by a global or cosmopolitan ethic as the basis of the international order.'[66] Joining Thomas's critique, Lynch proposed the idea of the Enlightenment's presumption to explain the rejection of religion in IR. The intellectual development during the Enlightenment, according to Lynch, included the assumptions that religion promoted romanticism, ignorance, and backwardness, that it was dogmatic, intolerant, and unchanging, and that it potentially promoted inferiority, coercion, and violence. Consequently, in the post-Westphalia settlement and during the

[52] Ibid.
[53] Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton, N.J. ; Woodstock :: Princeton University Press, 2008), 1.
[54] Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously; *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*.
[55] Fox and Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations*.
[56] K. R Dark, "Large-Scale Religious Change and World Politics," in *Religion and International Relations*, ed. K. R Dark (New York: Palgrave, 2000).
[57] Lynch, "Dogma, Praxis and Religious Perspectives on Multiculturalism; "A Neo-Weberian Aproach to Religon in International Politics."
[58] Harris, "Theological Reflections on Religious Resurgence and International Stability: A Look at Protestant Evangelicalism."
[59] Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, "The Return from Exile: An Introduction," in *Religion in International Relations*, ed. Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2003).
[60] Ralph Pettman, "In Pursuit of World Peace: Modernism, Sacralism, and Cosmopiety " *Global Change, Peace and Security* 22, no. 2 (2010).
[61] Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*.
[62] Jeffrey Haynes, "Religion and International Relations in the 21st Century: Conflict or Co-Operation?," *Third World Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (2006); "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia."
[63] Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously," 24.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 54.

Enlightenment, religion lost its political authority in international politics.[67] The Westphalia settlement changed the international political landscape, and, arguably, produced a political theology that influenced IR considerably.[68] In such circumstances, imagining that religion would be properly taken into account within IR scholarship is extremely difficult.

The second reason for the marginalisation of religion in IR is that, like other social sciences, IR has been influenced by modernization and secularization theories that overlook the role of religion in public and political life.[69] The rejection of religion in IR, according to Harzopoulos and Petito, is embedded in IR's genetic code, because IR was constructed during a period of European history that was marked by the end of the Wars of Religion.[70] The secularization paradigm has become a central epistemological ingredient of the modernist-rationalist tradition of knowledge that strongly rejects knowing by believing. Consequently, it includes the view that the religious narrative is unscientific, metaphysical, or even superstitious[71] and that the world will be 'controlled through reason, science, technology and bureaucratic rationality… [This] leaves out considerations of the religious, the spiritual or the sacred.'[72]

The third explanation for the strong rejection of religion in IR is the fact that realist, neo-realist, or structural-realist perspectives have dominated IR.[73] Those perspectives focus on material power capabilities, economics, and strategic interaction, and leave little room for religion as a possible organizing power in international circumstances.[74] Fox and Sandler add that IR is perhaps the most Western-centric of the social science disciplines in which religious discourse is considered inappropriate.[75]

Lastly, behaviourism and the use of quantitative methodology have greatly influenced the study of IR, leading to the strong rejection of religion in that field.[76] In this context, because it is

[67] The Treaty of Westphalia changed the medieval universalism that regulated intra-state and inter-state affairs into the "modern diplomacy" that was marked by the monopoly of the nation-state for conducting inter-state affairs. See Costas M. Constantinou and James Der Derian, ed. *Sustainable Diplomacies*, Sustaining Global Hope: Sovereignty, Power and Transformation of Diplomacy (England: Palgrave Macmillan 2010), 6.

[68] Thomas, *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 55.

[69] *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 50.

[70] Fabio Petito and Hatzopoulos, "The Return from Exile: An Introduction," 1.

[71] Pettman, "In Pursuit of World Peace: Modernism, Sacralism, and Cosmopiety " 198.

[72] Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously," 22.

[73] *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 55-56; Fox and Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, 10.

[74] Thomas, *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 55; Fox and Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, 10.

[75] *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, 9.

[76] Ibid; Thomas, *The Global Resurgance of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 59-60.

almost impossible to quantify religion, most IR academics have tended to exclude religion from consideration.

To some extent, the relative neglect of religion also applies to PCRS. One of the principal reasons for the establishment of PCRS as a special field of studies was the critique of the inability of IR and of international mechanisms to prevent the eruption of the Second World War. However, the "founding fathers" of PCRS[77] could not entirely escape from the established paradigm of IR. Whereas figures such as Kenneth Boulding and Elise Bjorn-Hansen came from a religious tradition,[78] which had a considerable influence on their decision to become involved in PCRS, they often did not fully integrate religion into PCRS as an academic discipline. Scholars also viewed PCRS as a product of the secular tradition of modernist social scientific knowledge, which has tended to overlook religion. In addition, as Ramsbotham et al. noted, the founders of PCRS assumed the Western-centric view that conflict resolution was a universal, one-size-fits-all approach that applies across cultures and societies.[79]

Peace and conflict resolution scholars and practitioners have only turned their attention to the question of religion during the past two decades or so. Ramsbotham proposed four historical stages of the development of conflict resolution and peace studies: *precursors* (1918–1945), *foundations* (1945–1965), *consolidation (*1965–1985), and *reconstruction* (1985–2005).[80] The question of the possible roles that religion might play only emerged "implicitly" during the last stage (reconstruction). This is called "an implicit development," because the academic debates, as I illustrate below, did not addressed directly and explicitly the role of religion in conflict resolution. Rather, the debates simply helped to create opportunities to include possible roles for religion in issues relating to conflict resolution.

At least three pivotal intellectual developments have helped to create room for discussing religion in IR and PCRS. The first is "Track Two diplomacy"; the second, is the idea of "peacebuilding from below"; and the third is the discussion of the role of culture in conflict resolution.

(1) From Track-Two to Faith-Based Diplomacy

For an extremely extended period, the state and its associated institutions have been regarded as the only authentic institution for maintaining and guaranteeing peace and order. This position has been

[77] Kenneth Boulding, Elise Bjorn-Hansen, Johan Galtung and John Burton are among the scholars who laid down the foundation for PCRS, see Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, 39-47.
[78] They were members of the Society of Friend (Quakers). See ibid., 40.
[79] Ibid., 302.
[80] Ibid., 34-35.

justified by mainstream orthodox international scholarship.[81] Consequently, formal approaches to maintaining national and international peace and order have become a widely accepted norm.

However, in the last three decades, scholars and practitioners began to advocate the importance of the informal processes of diplomacy because states could not guarantee peace and order. In the name of the monopoly on legitimate force, states often became the source of violent conflicts, mass atrocities, and human rights violations. As a result, some academics began to offer new avenues to address the limitations of the state. One of the examples on this endeavour is the introduction of the concept of "Track Two diplomacy" by Joseph Montville and William D. Davidson in 1981, as an alternative to "Track One diplomacy."[82]

The concept of Track-Two diplomacy includes the assumption that diplomacy should not be monopolized by state-officials only (Track One diplomacy), but should also be extended to unofficial diplomacy (Track Two), which is conducted by non-state actors, such as professional and non-governmental organisations.[83] Following Montville and Davidson's publication, a substantial number of scholarly works have developed the idea of Track Two.[84] Diamond and McDonald elaborated the idea of Track Two diplomacy further by outlining multi-track diplomacy: nine separate tracks of diplomacy, including religion.[85]

While scholars developed the notions of Tracks One and Two, major political upheavals with religious dimensions occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. This provoked IR scholars and professional diplomats to consider religion as one of the missing factors of statecraft.[86] The advocacy for the critical role of religion in politics and diplomacy eventually led to creating the concept of faith-based diplomacy, which incorporated the concept of Track Two diplomacy.[87]

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[81] Vanessa Wyeth and Charles Call, *Building States to Build Peace* (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008).
[82] Joseph V. Montville and William D. Davidson, "Foreign Policy According to Freud," *Foreign Policy* 1981.
[83] It should be noted here that diplomacy was commonly practiced long before the establishment of the modern diplomatic system. Even during the modern diplomatic system era, non-state, or sub-state actors have been able to practice diplomacy despite serious attempts by nation-states to eliminate them. These attempts may be called *paradiplomacy.* For further explanation, see Costas M. Constantinou and James Der Derian, "Sustaining Global Hope: Sovereignty, Power and the Transformaton of Diplomacy," in *Sustainable Diplomacy: Studies in Diplomacy and International Relations*, ed. Costas M. Constantinou and James Der Derian (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 12.
[84] John W. McDonald Jr and Diane B. Bendahmane, eds., *Conflict Resolution: Tract Two Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: Foriegn Service Institute, 1987); Josesp V Montville, ed. *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Book, 1989). John Burton, a founding father of PCRS, is one of the contributors of the book. See John W. Burton, "Track-Two Diplomacy: An Alternative to Power Politics," in *Conflict Resolution: Track-Two Diplomacy*, ed. John W. McDonald Jr and Diane B. Bendahmane (Washington, DC: Foreign Service Institute, 1987); Shai Feldman and Husayn Agha, *Track- Ii Diplomacy: Lessons from the Middle East* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2003); Paul Evans, "Canada and Asia Pacific's Track-Two Diplomacy," *International Journal* 64, no. 4 (2009); Esra Çuhadar and Bruce W. Dayton, "Oslo and Its Aftermath: Lessons Learned from Track Two Diplomacy," *Negotiation Journal* 28, no. 2 (2012).
[85] Louise Diamond and John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace* (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996).
[86] Johnston and Samson, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*.
[87] Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, "Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement," in *Douglas Johnston* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 15; Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, 174-90. For further reading on faith-

The conceptualisation of faith-based diplomacy was strengthened by successful cases where religious actors showed that they could prevent and resolve conflict. Some noticeable achievements of faith-based diplomacy were the role of the Vatican in mediating the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962[88] and in preventing war between Chile and Argentina over the 1978 Beagle Channel dispute.[89] Another successful case of faith-based diplomacy was the role of the Catholic lay community called Sant'Egidio, which played critical roles in mediating conflict in Mozambique, Uganda, Burundi, Algeria, and Guatemala.[90]

In short, the concepts of Track Two and multi-track diplomacy might be seen as a complementary rather than truly alternative to Track-One because states and their associated institutions are still regarded as the most important agents in pursuing peace and maintaining world order. Yet, this is a significant development in IR, where the concept of faith-based diplomacy can be subsumed under the concept of Track Two diplomacy.

(2) Peacebuilding from Below

As was discussed above, states and their associated institutions have acted as central players in pursuing peace, order, and security. Although the UN's *An Agenda for Peace* includes the recognition of the role that non-governmental organisations might play,[91] it seems reasonable to argue that the big players in New York and Geneva make most decisions about peace and security.

The formal state-centric approach to peacebuilding could be called "top-down peacebuilding" because everything is discussed, designed, and even implemented by the state apparatus and international and regional organisations, which have shown limited consideration for input by the people who are involved in the conflict. In numerous cases, the manner in which formal peacebuilding programmes are conducted tends to lead disputants to perceive resolving conflict and building peace as the business of outsiders, rather than their own. The idea of "peacebuilding from below" has emerged in response to this situation.

One of the most prominent scholars to champion the idea of peacebuilding from below is John Paul Lederach. Working as a scholar-practitioner within the Mennonite tradition, which shares

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based diplomacy see Brian Cox and Daniel Philpott, "Faith-Based Diplomacy: An Ancient Idea Newly Emergent," *The Brandywine Review of Faith and International Affairs* 1, no. 2 (2003); Ray Takeyh, "Faith-Based Initiatives: Can Islam Bring Democracy to the Middle East," *Foriegn Policy* November-December 2001; Jodok Troy, "Faith-Based Diplomacy under Examination," *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3, no. 3 (2008).

[88] Ronald J. Rychlak, "A War Prevented: Pope John Xxiii and the Cuban Missele Crisis," *Crisis Magazine* November 11, 2011. Can be accessed on http://www.crisismagazine.com/2011/preventing-war-pope-john-xxiii-and-the-cuban-missile-crisis (assessed on 26 February 2014).

[89] Lisa Lindsley, "The Beagle Channel Settlement: Vatican Mediation Resolves a Century-Old Dispute," *Journal of Church and State* (1987).

[90] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, 158-64.

[91] An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping, Report of Secretary General 17 June 1992, can be accessed on http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html (accessed on 17 July 2010).

many of the values and ideas of the Quakers, Lederach emphasized the importance of engaging and respecting local and indigenous cultures and considering them as critical peacebuilding resources. Thus, Lederach stated the following:

> The principle of indigenous empowerment suggests that conflict transformation must actively envision, include, respect, and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting. This involves a new set of lenses through which we do not primarily 'see' the setting and the people in it as the 'problem' and the outsider as the 'answer'. Rather, we understand the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting.[92]

Peacebuilding from below implies fostering a bottom up approach to peacebuilding by involving disputants in all peacebuilding processes and using local resources from within conflict settings.

Lederach expanded his ideas of "peacebuilding from below" by identifying three levels of leadership: (1) top-level leadership, (2) middle-range leadership, and (3) grassroots leadership. Leaders from each level should work hand-in-hand, comprehensively and continuously aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Lederach included religious leaders together with political and military leaders at the top-level of leadership. They are high profile public figures who have substantial power in conflict settings.[93] In short, the discourse of "peacebuilding from below" presents an opportunity for discussing the possible role that religious actors and institutions might play.

(3) The Question of Culture

Another critical development that helps to reveal the potential contribution of religion in conflict resolution is the recent discussion about the importance of culture in conflict resolution. Religion, in this context, is seen as part of local culture, which can be used as a resource to resolve conflict. For a long period, cultural considerations were marginalized, if not perceived as an irrelevant factor in peace and conflict resolution discourses. For example, Burton, one of the founders of conflict resolution, highlighted the importance of a "universal human needs approach," which tends to ignore the central role of culture in resolving conflict. Burton argued that

> [c]onflict resolution has a focus on frustrated human needs. Such needs are a part of human inheritance and common to all people, regardless of culture. It must be assumed, therefore, that analytical processes, which seek to reveal those needs that are held in common, are applicable to all cultures.[94]

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[92] John Paul Lederach, "Conflict Transformation in Protracted Internal Conflicts: The Case for a Comprehensive Framework " in *Conflict Transformation*, ed. Kumar Rupesinghe (London: Macmillan, 1995), 212.

[93] *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconsilaiation in Divided Societies* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2004), 38 - 54.

[94] John W. Burton, *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes* (Lanham and London: Scarecrow, 1996), 23.

The new generation of conflict resolution scholars and practitioners have criticized Burton's approach to conflict.[95] The questions of culture or difference partly emerged as a critique of Burton's argument, which is rooted in a Western tradition of knowledge, whereby conflict resolution is treated as a universal panacea and a one-size-fits-all solution. This new stream in conflict resolution thought includes the argument that a universal framework for resolving conflict does not exist. Different people from different cultural backgrounds perceive conflict differently. This, in turn, leads to different avenues in which people might resolve conflicts. Culture leads to the construction of worldviews that shape the meaning, ideas, thoughts, behaviours, attitudes, actions, and reactions towards conflict. Recognising and considering different socio-cultural contexts, therefore, becomes critical in conflict resolution.[96]

Nowadays, numerous scholars argue that in conflict resolution culture 'is in the end the most important issue of all.'[97] This recognition, however, is not as simple as that statement. As Brigg noted, the acceptance of culture in conflict resolution results from a long historical process—a combination of bitter practical experiences and intellectual arguments to convince academia and policy makers that culture is a considerable factor that should be accounted for in this field.[98]

In this regard, the recognition of the pivotal role of culture in conflict resolution has presented an opportunity for discussing the role of religion in peacebuilding. Religion can be a central part of culture in many contexts. In numerous societies, culture blends with religious beliefs and rituals that constitute local custom. Some scholars have discussed culture and religion as inseparable resources for resolving conflict and building trust and reconciliation.[99] In other words, the discussion of the critical role of culture in conflict resolution contributes to opening a larger space to discuss the potential role that religion might play in peacebuilding.

2.1.2 Perspectives on Religion, Violence, and Peace

Having discussed the indirect academic developments of religion within IR and PCRS, I now turn to the contemporary scholarly debate on religion, violence, and peace. The literature on religion and violence is not a new topic in social research. However, after the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent "war on terror" in Iraq and Afghanistan, the literature on religion, peace, and violence increased

[95] See, for example Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflic Resolution* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2004); Morgan Brigg, *The New Politics of Conflict Resolution: Responding to Difference* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).
[96] Kevin Avruch, "Introduction: Culture and Conflict Resolution," in *Conflict Resolution: Cross -Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Kevin Avruch, Peter W. Black, and Josep A. Scimecca (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 14-15.
[97] Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, 302.
[98] Morgan Brigg, "Culture: Challange and Possibilities," in *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding: Critical Developments and Approaches*, ed. Oliver P. Richmond (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 329.
[99] See for example Thomas, "Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously." And also in Chapter 15 Culture, Religion and Conflict Resolutio; Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*.

considerably.[100] For the purposes of this project, these academic endeavours can be grouped into three broad categories: the secularist-atheist perspective, the religious violence perspective, and the religious peacebuilding perspective.

The rise of (ethno-) religious conflicts after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, together with the re-emergence of religious radical fundamentalism in several parts of the world has led the so-called new atheists to produce scholarly works on the role of religion in public life.[101] Sam Harris[102], Richard Dawkins,[103] and Christopher Hitchens[104] are major public figures within this group. With somewhat different emphases, these authors promoted not only the separation of church and state but also, and more importantly, regarded religion as a real threat for the future of human civilization and argued, therefore, that it should be overcome.

Harris, for example, began his book by describing what he took to be the irony of a suicide terrorist bomber killing innocent people without feeling guilty. Moreover, his family is even proud of his accomplishment and believes that he has gone to paradise, while also sending all the victims to Hell for eternity.[105] Harris explained how dangerous religion is in the current situation:

> There seems, however, to be a problem with some of our most cherished beliefs about the world: they are leading us, inexorably, to kill one another. A glance at history, or at the pages of any newspaper, reveals that the ideas which divide one group of human beings from another, only unite them in slaughter, generally have their root in religions. It seems that if our species ever eradicates itself through war, it will not be because it was written in the stars but because it was written in our books; it is what we do with words like "God" "paradise" and "sin" in the present that will determine our future.[106]

Furthermore, Harris argued that intolerance is intrinsic to all religious traditions, which cause war, torture, killing, and human rights abuses, and that, therefore, there should be no room for religion among future generations.[107]

In addition to Harris, Hitchens offered the very bold conclusion, which is reflected in the title of his book, that religion is dangerous because it "poisons everything." To support his argument Hitchens even asserted that Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., one of the leaders of civil rights movement in the United States, is not a Christian. Hitchens argued that Rev. King was not a pious Christian

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[100] Charles K. Bellinger, "Religion and Violence: Bibliography " *The Hedgehog Review* Spring 2004(2004): 111.
[101] Owen Anderson, "The New Atheists: The Twighlight of Reason & the War on Religion - by Tina Beattie; God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything - by Christopher Hitchens; the Portable Atheist: Essential Readings for the Nonbeliever - Edited by Christopher Hitchens," *Reviews in Religion & Theology* 16, no. 2 (2009).
[102] Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2004).
[103] Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam Press, 2006).
[104] Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2008).
[105] *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve, 2007), 11.
[106] Ibid., 12.
[107] Ibid., 13.

because his civil rights advocacy through non-violence contradicts the basic teachings of Christianity in the Bible, which contains violence from cover to cover.[108] Conversely, in Chapter 17, Hitchens argued that Hitler and Stalin are religious simply because they preach totalitarianism and absolutism. The two ideas, according to Hitchens, are rooted in religion; therefore, the political catastrophes that were caused by Hitler and Stalin derived from religious conceptions.[109]

In short, the secular-atheist perspective presents arguments by referring to contemporary evidence of religious violence, which occur in almost every corner of the world. This leads contributors to this perspective to conclude that religions are dangerous and the future of humanity depends on serious efforts to eliminate religion from social and political agendas.

This perspective is seriously mistaken in two respects. First, it is undoubtedly true that religion causes a number of problems for humanity, as I discussed above. However, those holding this perspective should not so easily neglect the fact that religion has also contributed substantially to peaceful and non-violent coexistence in numerous communities worldwide. Second, the focus of the secular-atheist perspective is to criticize religion by showing that it is the most dangerous factor in human history. This perspective ignores the fact that secular-atheist leaders and regimes contributed to generate major destructive world events, such as wars, famines, and poverty.

The second perspective is the religious violence perspective. The academic works of scholars such as McTernan,[110] May,[111] Ross,[112] Clayton,[113] Selengut,[114] Al-Rasheed and Shterin,[115] Gluck,[116] Kimball,[117] and Juergensmeyer,[118] can be grouped into this category. Unlike the secular-atheist perspective, which includes the perception of religion as the principal source of world problems, this group carefully examines the role of religion in social and political life by combining theological, political, and sociological approaches. The principal research concern of this group is to seek a rational explanation as to why the followers of the major religions engage in violence.

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[108] *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, 207-10.
[109] Ibid., 275-303.
[110] Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God's Name: Religion in an Age of Conflict* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2003).
[111] John D'Arcy May, *Transcendence and Violence: The Encounter of Buddhist, Christian, and Primal Traditions* (New York: Continuum, 2003).
[112] Jeffrey Ian Ross, *Religion and Violence: An Encyclopedia of Faith and Conflict from Antiquity to the Present* (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 2011).
[113] Clayton Crockett, ed. *Religion and Violence in a Secular World: Toward a New Political Theology* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).
[114] Charles Selengut, *Sacred Fury: Understanding Religious Violence* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008).
[115] Madawi Al-Rasheed and Marat Shterin, eds., *Dying for Faith: Religiously Motivated Violence in the Contemporary World* (New York I.B. Tauris, 2009).
[116] Andrew Lee Gluck, ed. *Religion, Fundamentalism, and Violence: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (Chicago, IL: University of Scranton Press, 2010).
[117] Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil* (New York: HapperCollins, 2008).
[118] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Name of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (London: University of California Press, 2000). *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al-Qaedah.*

Kimball, for example, argued that five serious problems in the major religions lead to violence and destruction: (1) absolute truth claims; (2) blind obedience; (3) establishing an "ideal" time; (4) the end justifies any means; and (5) declaring a holy war. Kimball argued the following:

> In every religion, truth claims constitute the foundation on which the entire structure rests. However, when particular interpretations of these claims become propositions requiring uniform assent and are treated as rigid doctrines, the likelihood of corruption in that tradition rises exponentially. Such tendencies are the first harbingers of the evil that may follow.[119]

Throughout his book, Kimball made the point that that religious believers should avoid these "five warning signs" by as an avenue to prevent religion from leading to destructive conditions in society.

Another scholar in this group, Juergensmeyer, argued that religions have their own *inherent* problem, that is, a propensity to violence, leading him to present the concept of "cosmic war."[120] He calls it cosmic because it is "larger than life."[121] Cosmic war evokes "great battles in the past" and it relates to the "metaphysical conflict between good and evil."[122] Before discussing contemporary forms of religious violence, he argues for the need to recognize violence in religious symbolism and tradition.[123] Jurgensmayer gives convincing examples. The brutal martyrdom of Hussain in the Shi'ite tradition, the death of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Sikhism, and the wars in the Hindu Epic are among numerous examples that are used to justify contemporary acts of religious violence as just wars, to destroy evil, to or to uphold the *dhumma* (order). Juergensmayer goes further to state that 'they have been justified and thereby exonerated as part of a religious template that is even larger than myth and history. They are elements of a ritual scenario that makes it possible for the people involved to experience safely the drama of cosmic war.'[124]

This second group of scholars has made considerable efforts to challenge the atheist perspective, which very often makes sweeping generalizations about all religions, without making any qualifications or highlighting any exceptions, as the one and only source of political turmoil in the world. Kimball's approach to the warning signs of religious violence, for example, has helped to challenge the oversimplifications about religion that the first group had proposed. Setting up criteria (five warning signs) makes distinguishing between "bad" and "good" religion possible, rather than simply assuming that all religion is bad.

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[119] Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*, 49.
[120] Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Name of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, 146.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al-Qaedah.*, 213.
[124] Ibid., 214.

In other parts of his book, Juergensmeyer also identified that one of the root causes of religious violence in numerous parts of the world is the serious problem of the loss of faith in secular nationalism. After the Second World War, many newly independent countries subscribed to the secular nationalist ideology because secular nationalism included the promise to people that they would enjoy political freedom, social justice, equality, and prosperity. However, in numerous cases the government of the new emerging states failed to deliver that promise; numerous people even perceived governments as "morally vacuous and politically corrupt."[125] This type of argument also helps to identify reasons why in specific contexts, religion can be used to mobilise violence. However, I argue that the second group of scholars' works show that the issue of religion and violence remains their focus: they have not yet directly touched upon the roles that religion and peacebuilding might play.

The third grouping of academic endeavour centres on the religious peacebuilding perspective. For the last 10 years, research interest about religion, peacebuilding, and peacemakers has grown. These intellectual endeavours have challenged both the secular perspective, in which religion is seen as always having affected humanity negatively, and the religious-violence perspective, which has not yet included fully the possibility that religion might play constructive roles in peacemaking.

Scholars such as Gopin,[126] Abu-Nimer,[127] Appleby,[128] Smock,[129] Coward and Smith,[130] David Little,[131] Johnston,[132] Jeffrey Haynes[133] might be included into this group. Most of their contributions appear in "edited books" instead of single-authored works, except for the work of Gopin, Appleby, and Abu-Nimer—perhaps providing an indication that this type of research is still in its formative stage.

One of the best contributions in this endeavour is Appleby's book, *the Ambivalence of the Sacred*,[134] which offered a valuable framework for thinking about religion and peacebuilding. In his seminal book, for example, unlike the first and the second perspectives, Appleby gave a balanced perspective on the relation between religion, violence, and peace. Appleby considered religion as a double-edged sword, evoking this through what he terms "the ambivalence of the sacred."

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[125] Ibid., 10.
[126] Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armagedon: The Future of World Religions, Violence and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford Press, 2000).
[127] Mohammad Abu-Nimer, "A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam," *Journal of Law and Religion* Vol. 15, no. 1/2 (2000-2001). *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice* (Florida: The University Press of Florida, 2003).
[128] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*.
[129] David R. Smock, ed. *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2002).
[130] Smith, *Religion and Peacebuilding*.
[131] Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profile of Religion in Conflict Resolution*.
[132] Douglas Johnston, *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[133] Haynes, "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia."
[134] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*.

Appleby gave ample evidence that religion plays a pivotal function in societies. On the one hand, notorious catastrophes have occurred in every corner of the world where religions are used to justify torture, genocide, and other human rights violations. On the other hand, in numerous cases, religions have greatly contributed to resolving and mediating protracted conflicts. The Community of Sant'Egidio,[135] for example, played a critical role in mediating violent conflicts in Mozambique, Uganda, Burundi, Algeria, and Guatemala.[136] Another noticeable example of positive religious work in conflict resolution was the essential engagement of the African Churches in the process that was set up by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa. Furthermore, Samdech Gosanda, who belongs to the Buddhist tradition in Southeast Asia, has also influenced conflict resolution work in Cambodia.[137]

Appleby suggested using the ambivalence of religion as an opportunity for religious peacebuilding. Efforts to utilise ambivalence as a source of peacebuilding, according to Appleby, largely rely on the quality of the leadership of religious leaders to interpret religious texts, precepts, rituals and ethics in contextual hermeneutics, so they can be used to mobilise the religious community for peacebuilding.[138]

In short, Appleby's work is an excellent illustration of how analyses in PCRS are becoming nuanced by linking the ambivalence of religion to the potential role of religion for peacebuilding. Arguably, although the religious peacebuilding perspective is a relatively new development in social science, the existing literature has begun, to some extent, to provoke new debates among conflict resolution scholars and practitioners to engage seriously with the significant contribution of religion in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

This literature of the third group, however, suffers from two problems. Firstly, within the international political context (the end of the Cold War, followed by a sharp increase of ethno-religious conflict, and the 9/11 attacks), people have tended to make sweeping generalisations and celebrate the importance of religion's role as a newly identified source of peacebuilding. Unfortunately, theoretical explanations, classifications, and clarifications of the context, scope, scale, and types of conflict are inadequate and were not offered to demonstrate how religion can be used as a valuable asset for peacebuilding. The academic works on religious peacebuilding would also benefit from case studies that can offer greater detail and that can supply further and deeper analysis.[139]

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[135]The Community of Sant'Egidio is a Catholic Church public lay association established in Rome in 1968 following the Second Vatican Council. For more detail, see http://www.santegidio.org/ (accessed on 10 November 2010).
[136] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, 158-64.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid., 282-84.
[139] A key contribution is David Little's edited volume presenting the extraordinary work of twelve peacemakers from around the world. David R. Smock also edited a very intriguing book about seven religious peacemakers. For further

Secondly, the research on religion and peacebuilding tends to focus heavily on the normative values of religion that can be utilised for conflict resolution. Of course, sacred texts are the most influential resource within the traditions of most world religions. Therefore, hermeneutic exercises to contextualise and rejuvenate the understanding of religious texts in accordance with the newest challenges are crucial. The contextualised interpretation of sacred texts also plays a central role in shaping new and peace-oriented understandings of religions for their younger adherents. However, emphasising only the textual dimension of religion (what is written in the sacred texts) while ignoring how the texts are interpreted and practiced cannot adequately capture the place and possibilities of religion in peacebuilding.

To adequately understand the role of religion as a peacebuilding resource, and, indeed, to expand the understanding of the accompanying challenges and possibilities, examining the textual aspect of religion (what is written in the sacred texts) and its historical dimensions (what religious followers practice) becomes a critical necessity. In particular, understanding how religious adherents interpret, contextualise, link, and use religious resources as a concrete foundation for peacebuilding activities in local contexts is critical.

2.2 Religion in "Religious Conflict" in Maluku and Mindanao

2.2.1 Research on Conflict in Maluku: An Overview and Assessment

In this section, I demonstrate that changes in conflict dynamics allow scholars to shift their focus, approach, and perspective to produce different understandings of conflict. I have found that different scholars who are studying different conflict phases represent the position of religion in conflict and peace differently. Specifically, the research focus on Maluku has shifted from scholars who focused their research on the early phase of *conflict* to those who conducted research in a *post-conflict* situation. Based on the groupings that I outlined in the last section, the mainstream scholarly works *on conflict* can be grouped into the *religion and violence perspective*. The scholars who subscribed to it tended to denounce (the politicisation of) religion as one the primary factors that contributes the conflict, while they ignored the role of religion in peacebuilding. In contrast, the academic work on post-conflict situations can be partly subsumed under the *religion and peacebuilding perspective.* It has begun to include an appreciation of the role of culture, identity, emotion, and religion in its analysis. However, I found that the secular paradigm, which includes the presumption that religion has always negatively influenced public life, continues to overshadow

details see Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profile of Religion in Conflict Resolution*. and David R. Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking* (Washington, DC USIP, 2006).

the research on Maluku. Consequently, the role of religion in peacebuilding, as the primary focus of this research, is still underdeveloped.

(1) Research on the Maluku Conflict

Since the Maluku conflict erupted in 1999, Maluku has become a social science research laboratory that has produced a wide range of scholarly works.[140] In this section, I examine three influential scholarly works that constitute a considerable attempt to understand conflict in Maluku. The first is the work of Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, which was published in 2004.[141] The second is John T Sidel's book, entitled *Riots, Pogroms and Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*, which was published in 2006.[142] Lastly is Gerry van Klinken's book, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*.[143] I found these three books are among the most thoughtful scholarly works that have been written in an effort to understand conflict in Maluku. Therefore, other scholars have widely cited and referred to them. Although the three books introduced different theoretical arguments and methodological approaches, I found that they represent the conventionally accepted wisdom in the social sciences, which has displayed a tendency to ignore the role of religion in conflict resolution processes or even simply blame religion as a (significant) factor that contributes to initiating and prolonging the conflict.

Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia is among the first books to be published in an attempt to explain ethno-religious conflict that has been sparked in specific locations in Indonesia, including Maluku. Using a historical institutional perspective, Bertrand identified what he termed critical junctures in Indonesian history.[144] These include president Soeharto's policies in the late 1990s and his forced resignation in 1998, which presented the opportunity for renegotiating the relationship between political powers and ethnic groups in Indonesia.[145] In the context of local

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[140] Among others, see Tri Ratnawati, *Maluku Dalam Catatan Seorang Peneliti* (Jogjakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2006); Lambang Trijono, *Keluar Dari Kemelut Maluku* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001); Samuel Waileruny, *Membongkar Konspirasi Di Balik Konflik Maluku* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Jakarta, 2010); Jeroen Adam, "How Ordinary Folk Became Involved in the Ambonese Conflict: Understanding Private Opportunities During Communal Violence," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 166, no. 1 (2010); Jacques Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Moluccas Islands," *Pacific Affairs* 75, no. 1 (2002); Jeroen Adam, "Communal Violence, Forced Migration and Social Change on the Island of Ambon, Indonesia" (Universiteit Gent); Birgit Brauchler, "Islamic Radicalism Online: The Moluccan Mission of the Laskar Jihad in Cyberspace," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 15, no. 3 (2005); Amarina Ariyanto, "Media Bias During Extreme Intergroup Conflict: The Naming Bias in Report of Religious Violence in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Communication* 18, no. 1 (2008).

[141] Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[142] John T. Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms and Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[143] Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[144] Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Moluccas Islands," 3.

[145] Ibid.

politics in Maluku, Bertrand saw the combination of several factors as the root cause of the conflict. Firstly, because Maluku is one of the provinces in Indonesia where Muslims and Christians were almost equal in number, an open political conflict between Muslims and Christians ensued.[146] Second, Maluku provides an example where patrimonial networks, which are based on religious affiliation, were used to attain positions in governmental structures as the principal resources for achieving social and economic purposes.[147] Consequently, "religious identity played a strong role in the competition for positions in Maluku."[148] Bertrand explained this further:

> The Islamization of the Suharto regime in the 1990s disrupted the fragile balance in Maluku. Muslims gained a new sense of confidence to challenge the longstanding Christian dominance. Christians concomitantly felt threatened. With a growing fear that the government was becoming Islamized, they worried about losing the positions of power that ensured the security of their community.[149]

Thus, the early stage of the transition to democracy allowed the possibility for power competitions between Christians and Muslims to evolve into 'religious conflict'.

The use of a historical institutional perspective as a theoretical approach enabled Bertrand to capture the development of macro-level political events during a critical time in the Indonesia's transition to democracy. However, this perspective cannot allow the voices from the ground or, to borrow Aspinall's term, the "foot soldiers"[150] to emerge and be heard and, thus, explain why ordinary Muslims and Christians who were not (substantially) interested in politics became involved in the bloody conflict that risked their lives.

Secondly, still regarding the first point, Bertrand's theoretical approach might be appropriate for analysing the process of the instrumentalisation of religion for political purposes as the principal cause of the conflict. However, it fails to capture the local dynamics on the ground, where religion was used not only to mobilise conflict but also to organise peace, even from the very beginning of the conflict. In other words, Bertrand, like other scholars who are informed by the secular tradition of knowledge, tended to ignore the power of religion that was used for peacebuilding.

Approximately two years after Bertrand published his book, John T. Sidel published a seminal book that was crucial for the understanding religious violence in Indonesia. Sidel's work was more complicated than that of other scholars because it constituted an attempt to explain and identify the changing patterns of religious violence by analysing violent episodes in Indonesia involving riots, pogroms, and *jihads*. The term "riots" was a reference to the social unrest that occurred between 1995–1997 in specific provincial towns and cities in Indonesia, whereas "pogroms" was a reference

[146] Ibid., 114.
[147] *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, 114.
[148] Ibid., 117.
[149] Ibid., 114.
[150] Edward Aspinall, "Ethnic and Religious Violence in Indonesia: A Review Essay," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 62, no. 4 (2008): 570.

to the religious conflict in Central Sulawesi and Maluku that occurred around 1998–2001. Finally, the term "*Jihad*" referred to the mobilisation of paramilitary forces and terrorist attacks that occurred from 2000 to 2005.[151] Sidel attempted to explain the timing, location, protagonists, targets, mobilisational processes, and outcomes of those episodes of violence.[152]

Sidel built his theoretical framework on the uncertainty and ambiguity of religious identity. He argued that "violence erupts amid heightened states of uncertainty and anxiety as to religious identities and their boundaries, and attendant efforts toward the (re)definition of the self and the (re)articulation of claims of authority."[153] Through this framework, he concluded that the changing place of Islam within the dynamics of structural and political power contestation in Indonesia produced an uncertain and ambiguous position for Islamic identity, which implied changes in how violence was expressed. In this regard, Sidel held that the uncertainty and ambiguity of Islamic identity of Muslim communities within the context of power struggles among Muslim political elites at the national level was the principal cause of violence and of the change from one form of violence to another.

Sidel's detailed explanation of each episode of violence in Indonesia substantially contributed to understanding those episodes. Yet, his thesis has limitations. His own theoretical framework seems to force his conclusions. In this context, he blamed only Islam, and failed, therefore, to see Muslims in Indonesia as constituting a complex and dynamic community rather than a monolithic one, where Muslims leaders and organisations played a crucial role in combating religious violence, radicalism, and terrorism. Sidel also overlooked the powerful movements within the Muslim community that promote Islamic understandings that suit national identity building under the "secular principle" of *Pancasila* (five principles), which promote equality for all Indonesian citizens regardless of their religious and ethnic affiliations. Sidel tended to "essentialise" religion, which in this context is Islam, as a monolithic community that is responsible for the riots, pogroms, and the *jihads* that occurred in Indonesia.

Perhaps Sidel's analysis falls short because he entirely relied on secondary data or resources. His macro-structural analysis prevented him from adequately reading what exactly occurred on the ground. In the case of Maluku, for example, blaming Muslims as the only perpetrators of conflict and portraying Christians as the victims does not account for critical information regarding the nature of the conflict. As I demonstrate in the chapter of Maluku, local Muslim leaders strived to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict even during its early stages. My fieldwork in Maluku also shows that radical Christian groups in Maluku had links to military intelligence, and that they

[151] Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms and Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*, 7.
[152] Ibid., 73.
[153] Ibid.

actually acted to provoke and ignite the conflict. A more balanced account might be to suggest that that both Muslims and Christians were perpetrators and victims at the same time. His approach also included an inadequate analysis of the local dynamics of religious leaders and institutions, which, to some degree, might have gotten involved in the conflict. However, as I demonstrate in this thesis, they also contributed to build peace in Maluku in numerous ways.

In 2007, the year after Sidel published his book, Gerry van Klinken's seminal book on communal violence in Indonesia was released. Informed by the dynamics of contention (DoC) theory, which is a new stream in the social movement tradition, Klinken sought to explain the episodes of communal conflicts that accompanied political change in Indonesia.[154]

Using DoC theory, Klinken argued that the communal violence in Indonesia, including in Maluku, was part of a rational-calculative choice of political actors. This approach contrasted the more "traditional" approaches to collective violence, which included the argument that violence is irrational and emotional collective behaviour.[155] Furthermore, the DoC identifies five "rational" processes in contentious politics: (1) identity formation; (2) escalation; (3) polarization; (4) mobilization; and (5) actor constitution. Klinken used the five processes not only as his theoretical framework but also as the structure for his book.[156]

In the case of the Maluku conflict, Klinken used the "mobilization approach" to explain and rationalise how people were mobilised to participate in conflict in Maluku.[157] Using this approach, Klinken concluded that a certain calculative rationality on the part of the key actors was a driving force in the Maluku conflict. Therefore, Klinken focused his investigations on "organisational activities rather than on disembodied emotions such as pride and grievance."[158] With this approach, Klinken pinpointed the blame on local rather than national actors as perpetrators of the conflict. Specifically, Klinken foregrounded the political interests of the Protestant elites in the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan* (Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle) (PDI-P) and the *Gereja Protestan in Maluku* (Maluku Protestant Church) (GPM), which sought to retain political power and resources in a bureaucratic competition that had seemingly "been stolen" by Muslims in Maluku. For Klinken, this provided the rational basis for the mobilisation that led to the conflict.[159] In other words, the violence was explained as local politics by other means.

Klinken's book substantially contributed to understanding why the conflict erupted in Maluku. However, casting local actors (the PDIP and the GPM) as key agents of the conflict came at a cost. Klinken tended to make sweeping generalisations by framing the GPM as a monolithic

[154] Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 10.
[155] Ibid., 6-10.
[156] Ibid., 11.
[157] Ibid., 89.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid., 106.

religious structure. Whereas the GPM is a highly structured and hierarchical religious institution, this does not mean that the entire GPM structure supported the conflict. As I describe in the Chapter 3, the different political and theological perspectives that exist within the GPM led to different attitudes and actions toward conflict. Klinken did not capture the internal dynamics of the GPM and, as a result, missed the opportunity to consider the extent to which elements of the GPM could act as resources to support peacebuilding. My research fills this gap by providing evidence that religious institutions, including the GPM, have contributed to the peacebuilding process in Maluku.

In conclusion, the three books on conflict that I reviewed above contributed to understanding the conflict in Maluku. They nevertheless bear the secular paradigm biases that include an approach to religion as, primarily, a problem and as a monolithic phenomenon that the elites were involved in the Maluku conflict for political and economic purposes.

The three research books are also helpful because they included an explanation of the conflict using logical and rational terms; however, this does not facilitate a full understanding of the conflict. The dynamics of conflict, according to my fieldwork in Maluku, shows that factors such as emotion, subjectivity, and religious sentiments are, in fact, critical for understanding the conflict. Rather than simply playing out conflict as "politics by other means," religious emotions and sentiments played a critical part in igniting and prolonging the conflict that caused a substantial level of mutual distrust, prejudices, and stigmas among Muslims and Christians at the grassroots level. The secular paradigm biases also led to ignore the crucial realities on the ground, where religion was used to resolve outstanding tensions and provide resources to contribute towards relations that were more peaceful. As I observed in my fieldwork, the violence in Maluku could not be explained only in terms of political problems among the elites in Maluku. It was far more complex than that.

I now turn present three sets of literature that included an attempt to explain Maluku's situation in the post-conflict period. A group of scholars who focused on post-conflict Maluku has begun to develop a more nuanced analysis of the issues than that of scholars who had focused their research on *conflict* in Maluku, by including subjectivity, emotion, and religion in their analysis.

(2) Religion in Post-conflict Maluku

As I have argued, changes in conflict dynamics have affected how scholars have interpreted the role of religion in Maluku. Scholars investigating the conflict in Maluku focused on the role of political institutions and structures and the elites' interests as rational actors in mobilising conflicts. In addition, they regarded (the politicisation of) religion as one of the principal causes of the conflict and tended to ignore the capability of religion as an agent for peace. In contrast, scholars researching post-conflict Maluku moved beyond those issues and approaches by including a range

of issues, such as culture and local customs *(adat)*,[160] dialogue and interfaith dialogue,[161] and peacebuilding and reconciliation.[162]

However, in this subsection, I only review and assess three key studies that revealed the emergence of a new trend in the research on Maluku's post-conflict situation. The authors of these studies specifically advocate engaging with "non-rational" factors in conflict and conflict resolution, such as emotion, identity, subjectivity, culture, and even religion. I choose the three scholarly works because of their merit in terms of their theoretical and methodological approaches. They are, first, Muhammad Nazib Azca's PhD thesis on *After Jihad: The Biographical Approach to Passionate Politics in Indonesia;*[163] second, Alpha Amirrachman's PhD thesis entitled *Peace Education in Moluccas, Indonesia: Between Global Models and Local Interests*[164]*;* and, finally, Sumanto's PhD dissertation entitled *Inter-religious Violence, Civic Peace and Citizenship: Christians and Muslims in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia.*[165]

To the best of my knowledge Azca's work is the first piece of academic research where the task of accounting for emotion and subjectivity is advocated as crucial in understanding Maluku in the conflict and post-conflict periods. Azca's research marked the shift from research that sought to analyse *conflict* in Maluku in terms of objective-rational factors to research on *post-conflict* Maluku that accounted for "subjective-irrational factors" in its analysis.

In particular, Azca investigated the status of non-local religious fighters after their involvement in the conflicts in Maluku and Poso (Central Sulawesi).[166] In doing so, Azca developed his theoretical framework from the social movement tradition. Unlike Klinken, who followed McAdam, Tarraow, and Tilly's DoC theory of social movements, which includes a focus on investigating the logical reasons of the political processes behind communal conflicts in Indonesia, Azca followed Goodwin, Jasper, and Poletta's "passionate politics", a stream within the social

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[160] Bambang Wisodo, *Bertaruh Nyawa: Kisah Gerakan Peringatan Dini Di Ambon* (Jakarta: Yayasan TIFA, 2010); Alpha Amirrachman, ed. *Revitalisasi Kearifan Lokal: Studi Resolusi Konflik Di Kalimantan Barat, Maluku Dan Poso* (Jakarta: ICIP, 2007); Lukas Batmomolin, "Religious Conflict in Ambon, Indonesia: Reconciliation through Pela Gandong System" (The University of America, 2000); Birgit Brauchler, "Mobilising Culture and Tradition for Peace: Reconciliation in the Moluccas," in *Reconciling Indonesia: Grassroots Agency for Peace* ed. Birgit Brauchler (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[161] Ferdy Fabian, "The Process of Interfaith Dialogue as Peacebuilding Strategy During Conflict in Maluku" (The University on Queensland, 2010); Caemen Lawry and Stephen Littejohn, "Dialogue and the Discourse of Peacebuilding in Maluku, Indonesia," *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 24, no. 5 (2006).

[162] John Braithwaite, *Anomie and Violence: Non-Truth and Reconciliation in Indonesia Peacebuilding* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010); Brett R. Noel, "Conflict Resolution in a Non-Western Context: Convesation with Indonesians Scholars and Practitioners," *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 23, no. 24 (2006).

[163] Muhammad Najib Azca, "After Jihad: A Biographical Approach to Passionate Politics in Indonesia" (University of Amsterdam, 2011).

[164] Raden Alpha Amirrachman, "Peace Education in the Moluccas, Indonesia: Between Global Models and Local Intersest" (University of Amsterdam, 2012).

[165] Sumanto, "Interreligious Violence, Civic Peace, and Citizenship: Christians and Muslims in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia" (Boston University, 2013).

[166] Azca, "After Jihad: A Biographical Approach to Passionate Politics in Indonesia," 40.

movement tradition with a focus on understanding the links between identity, narrative, and emotions in social-religious movement.[167]

Azca chose a biographical approach as his research method. Through extremely intensive fieldwork in numerous Indonesian cities, Azca wrote 10 "jihadist biographies" from 21 core informants.[168] Azca found that every informant had different motivations to join *jihad* in Ambon and Poso. In addition, different experiences during the *jihad* led to different life trajectories and to the Islamic activism of the "jihadists 'alumni."

The rich empirical data that Azca produced was only possible through intensive and challenging fieldwork research. The use of a cultural approach to study the new social movements made a substantial theoretical contribution to a broad debate about the place of emotion, subjectivity, identity, and culture in the social sciences. In general, by drawing from the secular paradigm, the social sciences have tended to separate emotion and reason. Such separation is evident in Western approaches that scholars and conflict resolution practitioners adopted when they postulated that conflict could only be resolved by separating "the people from the problems" because this approach allowed people to resolve conflict *rationally.*[169] Azca convincingly demonstrated that he obtained his data from the grassroots to show that social scientists should not exclude emotion and subjectivity from their analysis.

In short, Azca's work exemplifies the current trend in research on Maluku that has started accounting for emotion and subjectivity, as opposed to the "rational" and "objective" approaches that were adopted in the scholarly works that I reviewed in previous section. Azca's research demonstrates how social scientific understandings are unduly constrained by the insistence on "rational" and "objective" approaches. As Azca showed, emotion and subjectivity played critical roles in the lives of Muslims who were engaged in the conflict and in post-conflict periods in Maluku. However, Azca did not consider the critical role of religion in the peacebuilding process in Maluku. Azca's theoretical approach could be extended to consider religion as essential in the peacebuilding process in Maluku.

Adopting them as the central focus of my research, I examine how culture, subjectivity, and emotion influence the interpretation of religious texts, and how they are used to contribute to peacebuiliding. As I demonstrate in Chapters 3 and 4, the personal "subjectivity" of religious believers plays critical roles in using sacred texts, traditions, and culture in the process of the

[167] Ibid., 69-70.
[168] Ibid., 100.
[169] Morgan Brigg and Roland Bleiker, "Postcolonial Conflict Resolution," in *Mediating across Difference: Oceanic and Asian Approachces to Conflict Resolution*, ed. Morgan Brigg and Roland Bleiker (Honolulu: University of Hawai"i Press, 2011), 29.

hermeneutics of peace: the efforts to find justification and motivation to engage in peacebuilding as part of religious spirituality and conviction.

Raden Alpha Amirrachman initiated another research trajectory in the post-conflict Maluku era and is among scholars who promote culture and local custom *(adat)* as an essential tool that can be used for peace education.[170] Specifically, his research has enriched the understanding of the complexity of Maluku's problems in the post-conflict peacebuilding phase in Maluku by introducing local *adat (pela gandong –orang basodara)* as a critical factor in promoting peaceful coexistence through peace education. Amirrachman wrote his PhD dissertation entitled *Peace Education in Moluccas, Indonesia: Between Global Models and Local Interests.* Amirrachman considered the work of Herrera, Clarke-Habibi, and Danesh who pointed to peace education as a crucial aspect of democracy and citizenship education, which included the assumption that increasing the understanding of peace education would help to decrease violence and consolidate peace.[171]

Amirrachman scrutinised the work of UNICEF, UNDP, and JICA, which are three key international peace education organisations that promote peace education in Maluku, to question whether the international modules that the three agencies adopted suited the needs of the local community in Maluku.[172] The peace education module aimed to marry the peace education curriculum that was commonly practiced in numerous parts of the world with a local awareness of peace that could be taken from local custom, such as *pela-gandong* and *baku bae.* In attempting to answer his research questions, Amirrachman conducted fieldwork in Ambon City and Central Maluku. Through an ethnographic methodology, Amirrachman observed four schools where UNICEF, UNDP, and JICA peace education projects were implemented.[173]

Although Amirrachman did not consider the role of religion in his research, at the beginning of his thesis, he did acknowledge that the network of the *Gereja Protestant Maluku* (GPM) is extremely influential at the provincial level and has a reach at the community levels.[174] Unfortunately, he did not elaborate further on whether the GPM structure, which he recognised as extremely powerful, influenced the implementation of the peace education programme. Amirrachman was not alone. Some scholars, such as Brauchler,[175] who emphasized the importance of *adat* for peacebuilding in post-conflict Maluku, also overlooked the contribution of religion.

My thesis, in this context, is particularly relevant because it includes an examination of an area (religion) that has been neglected, but that has been acknowledged by other scholars as critical.

[170] See footnote 117
[171] Amirrachman, "Peace Education in the Moluccas, Indonesia: Between Global Models and Local Intersest," 8.
[172] Ibid., 10.
[173] Ibid., 24-27.
[174] Ibid., 60.
[175] Brauchler, "Mobilising Culture and Tradition for Peace: Reconciliation in the Moluccas."

In particular, in the chapter on the Maluku case study, I demonstrate how official and unofficial religious organisations have promoted the revitalisation of local wisdom, such as *pela* and *gandong*, as part of the response to the post-conflict peacebuilding situation.

Whereas Azca promoted subjectivity and emotion as critical notions in research on Maluku, Amirrachman highlighted the significance of local *adat* in peacebuilding efforts, and Sumanto directly accounted for religion in his research to understand conflict in Maluku. The aim of Sumanto's book, *Inter-religious Violence, Civic Peace and Citizenship: Christians and Muslims in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia*,[176] was to answer a range of questions by adopting an anthropological approach. Sumanto endeavoured to identify at least the following three roles: (1) the roles of religion in mobilising conflict and peace in Maluku; (2) the roles of civil society groups in the peace and reconciliation process; and (3) the roles of government in the peace process.

In this research, Sumanto did not choose to follow strictly either a historical, a sociological, or an anthropological perspective in developing his arguments. Rather, he borrowed renowned anthropologist Robert Hefner's "total approach."[177] By adopting the total approach, Sumanto aimed to understand multiple aspects of the conflict and post-conflict periods in Maluku. This included the social history and politics of the society that affected the conflict, the human agency, and structure (individuals or social groupings) that caused the violence, rationality, and emotions that, in turn, drove conflict and peace, as well as the role of elites and grassroots movements as agents for peace and conflict.

Sumanto's findings can be summarised as follows. Firstly, he drew conclusions that are similar to those of scholars from Maluku, such as Abidin Wakano,[178] who, in linking the Maluku conflict to its historical context, traced it to the colonial era.[179] For example, Muslims and Christians have been living in villages that have been segregated along religious lines since the Dutch era and often distrusted and expressed animosity towards each other. Secondly, according to Sumanto, it is extremely clear that religious motivation greatly contributed to the escalation of conflict. Thirdly, religious discourses and actors also contributed to peacebuilding and reconciliation. Fourth, Sumanto credited the government for re-establishing peace and order in Maluku, something that, he claimed, was overlooked by numerous researchers.

[176] Sumanto modified his PhD thesis into the draft of a book manuscript and changed its title into *Blaming Politics, Forgetting Religion: Christian-Muslim Violence and Conciliation in Moluccas, Indonesia*

[177] Sumanto, "Interreligious Violence, Civic Peace, and Citizenship: Christians and Muslims in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia," 26 and 54.

[178] Abidin Wakano, "Islam Dan Kristen Di Maluku Tengah: Studi Tentang Akar-Akar Konflik Dalam Masyarakat" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, 2010).

[179] Sumanto, "Interreligious Violence, Civic Peace, and Citizenship: Christians and Muslims in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia," 356.

Sumanto' research generated rich data and findings. However, his total approach, by combining a range of social science perspectives, made his research rather broad and less focused. In some ways, Sumanto's research overlapped with this work (including sometimes interviewing the same people); however, both the focus of the research and the approach that he took were different. Whereas Sumanto stated that his dissertation 'is not solely devoted to the study of violence and peace [but] will simultaneously examine the social phenomena and actions of collective violence and inter-religious cooperation,'[180] my research, in contrast, is fully devoted to investigating the role of religious leaders and institutions that contribute to peacebuilding in Maluku.

Although peacebuilding is a complex phenomenon that involves a range of actors and institutions, I choose to focus specifically on the contribution of religious resources for peacebuilding in Maluku. This allows me to obtain a deep and broad understanding of religious peacebuilders in Southeast Asia. In other words, my specific focus on religion and peacebuilding, allows me to examine how religious people and institutions, official or formal and unofficial or informal uses of religious resources contribute to the peacebuilding process.

In short, the position of religion in the research on Maluku has shifted along with the changing conflict dynamics in Maluku. I label the "first generation" of researchers as Maluku *conflict* researchers. They are represented by the work of Bertrand, Sidel, and Klinken who subscribed to the religion and conflict perspective, and whose investigations focus on the "rational" and "objective" aspects on how and why the conflict erupted. In answering those questions, they tended to ignore or blame religion as a cause, if not the primary cause, of the conflict. This demonstrates, in general, the prevalent influence of the secular paradigm in the social sciences, which inclines to see religion as problem rather than a solution in the public sphere. In this tradition of knowledge, the possibility of approaching religion as having a potential role to play in peacebuilding has extremely limited room.

I have labelled the second generation of researchers who adopted the religious and peacebuilding perspective in Maluku as post-conflict researchers because, in alternative to the first generation of researchers, they accounted for subjectivity, irrationality, culture, and religion in their analyses. The works of Azca, Amirrachman, and Sumanto positively indicated that their research on Maluku was developing with greater nuance compared to that of their predecessors. However, because the Maluku post-conflict research was not fully released from the secular perspective, the role of religion in peacebuilding remained inadequately explored. Indeed, research that is conducted to investigate the role of religion as a resource for peace and reconciliation in Maluku by focussing

[180] Ibid., 44.

on influential religious institutions and leadership, is justified, and, in fact, needed to complement the existing literature.

2.2.2 Overview and Assessment of Research on Mindanao

The intractable conflict in Mindanao has led to the production of different perspectives, theoretical frameworks, and methods. Central research themes include the history of conflict and its root causes,[181] the formation of a Filipino and Moro political identity,[182] the assessment of the peace process,[183] and peace and gender.[184] In contrast to the extremely recent shift in research focus on religion as a peacebuilding resource in Maluku, the conflict in Mindanao has led to a substantive body of research on the topic.[185] In this context, I focus on two works that are relevant to my research. Subsequently, I develop my thesis to build upon and extend these research projects.

The two scholarly works that I review in this section are the work of William LaRousse, *Walking Together for Peace: the Local Church of Mindanao-Sulu Journeying in Dialogue with the Muslim Community (1965-2000),*[186] and the PhD dissertation of Jerson Benia Narciso, entitled *Christianity and Islam in the Search for Peace in Southern Philippines*.[187]

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[181] See, for example, B. R. Rodil, *A Story of Mindanao and Sulu in Question and Answer* (Davao City: MINCODE, 2003); Lela G. Noble, "Muslim Separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The Making of a Stalemate," *Asian Survey* 21, no. 11 (1981); "The Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs* 49, no. 3 (1976); Rosalita Tolibas- Nunez and Emil P. Bologaita, *Roots of Conflict: Muslims, Christians and the Mindanao Struggle* (Makati City: Asian Institute of Management, 1997).

[182] Thomas M. McKenna, *Muslim Rullers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philipinnes* (Manila: Anvil Publishing INC, 1998); Patricio N. Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippines Nation-State* (Quezon City: Atenao De Manila University Press, 2004); *Orthodoxy and History in the Muslim-Mindanao Narrative* (Quezon City: Ateneo De Manila University Press, 2010); Jeffrey Ayala Milligan, *Islamic Identity, Postcoloniality, and Education Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

[183] Astrid S. Tuminez, "This Land Is Our Land: Moro Ancestral Domain and Its Implications for Peace and Development in the Southern Philippines," *SAIS Review* XXVII, no. 2 (2007); R. J. May, "The Moro Conflict and the Philippines Experience with Muslim Autonomy," in *CCPCSAP Workshop* (Canberra2002); Steven Rood, *Forging Sustainable Peace in Mindanao: The Role of Civil Society* (Washington D.C: East-West Center, 2005); Soliman M. Santos, "A Holistic Perspective on Mindanao Conflict," (Quezon City2005); *Dynamics and Directions of Grp-Milf Peace Negotiations* (Davao City: AFRIM, 2005); Jacques Bertrand, "Peace and Conflict in the Southern Philippines: Why the 1996 Peace Agreement Is Fragile," *Pacific Affairs* 73, no. 1 (2000).

[184] Anne-Marie Hilsdon, " Invisible Bodies: Gender, Peace and Conflict in Mindanao," *Asian Studies Riview* 33(2009).

[185] Among others, see Hilario M. Gomez. Jr, *The Moro Rebellion and the Search of Peace: A Study on Christian-Muslim Relations in the Philippines* (Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publications, 2000); Ali B. Panda, *Mranao Ulama in the Politics: A Nonviolent Hijratic Approach* (Marawi City: King Faisal Center for Islamic, Arabic, and Asian Studies, 2009); Siti Sarah Muwahidah, "Interfaith Dialogue in Mindanao: Sharing Hope and Mutual Fears," in *The Ninth Asian Public Intellectuals Workshop* (Penang, Malaysia2010); Joseph Chinyong Liow, *Muslim Resistance in Southern Thailand and Southern Philippines: Religion, Ideology and Politics* (Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2006); Amando L Picardal, "Chirstian Muslim Dialogue in Mindanao," *Asian Christian Review* 2, no. 2 & 3 (2008).

[186] William LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace: The Local Church of Mindanao-Sulu Journeying in Dialogue with the Muslim Community (1965-2000)* (Quezon City: Claretian Publication, Inc, 2001).

[187] Jerson Benia Narciso, "Christianity and Islam in the Search for Peace in Southern Philippines'" (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2012).

LaRousse's book is the most comprehensive survey of the role of Catholic Church, as the majority religion in the Philippines, in peace and conflict in Mindanao. Although, in his book, LaRousse aimed to describe the Catholic Church's position towards peace from 1965 to 2000 (post-Second Vatican Council), LaRousse also explained in detail the historical background of the arrival of Islam and Christianity in Mindanao, and the prolonged conflict of the Moro Wars that produced political, cultural, and religious antagonisms between Muslims and Christians.[188]

LaRousse reviewed the written documents (particularly letters and statements) of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) that reflected the position of the Catholic Church on peace and conflict, and especially on how the idea of interfaith dialogue that the Second Vatican Council promoted operated in Mindanao and in the Philippines at large. He movingly explained the dynamics within the Catholic Church, the decision to implement the Second Vatican Council, especially the concept of inter-faith dialogue as the new form of Catholic mission. He argued that the initiative of organising interfaith dialogue, as an avenue to resolve conflict, emerged much earlier and more strongly in Mindanao, compared to the other parts of the Philippines. For example, in 1984, Bishop George Dion, head of the Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo, in his pastoral letter entitled *Attitudes of Christians towards Muslims*, showed that the attitudes of Catholics were contrary to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. He also recommended that the teachings of the Second Vatican Council should be included in the seminary curriculum and in the religious education of lay groups.[189] Since then, Catholic Church in Mindanao has undertaken numerous dialogue initiatives in various forms.

LaRousse's work reveals two dimensions that are useful for my research. First, it constitutes a useful secondary data source on the role of religion in peacebuilding in Mindanao. Among the earliest interfaith dialogue initiatives in Mindanao, which were outlined in the book, was the establishment of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM), which I use as a micro-case in the chapter of the Mindanao case study. In his book, LaRousse described a general profile of the SDM—its vision, mission, programmes and activities.[190] Whereas LaRousse's short and descriptive profile of SDM is extremely helpful, he neglected to address some critical questions. Among them are analytical questions, such as those concerning the specific religious resources that the SDM used in its dialogue mission and activities; the manner in which it used religious resources; the role that religion played in motivating the SDM activists to operate the SDM for three decades; and the effects of the SDM programmes and activities on the daily life of the people of Mindanao.

[188] LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace: The Local Church of Mindanao-Sulu Journeying in Dialogue with the Muslim Community (1965-2000)*, 23-71.
[189] Ibid., 355.
[190] Ibid., 386-400.

Second, LaRousse's description of how the local Catholic Church in Mindanao was increasingly motivated to implement the concept of interfaith dialogue as a product of the Second Vatican Council, compared to other Catholic churches in other parts of the Philippines, revealed the existence of an internal dynamic within the Catholic hierarchical structure. Although the Catholic Church is renowned for its rigid hierarchical structure, and especially for its rigidity on theological matters, in this case different social, cultural, and political settings of country and region led to different interpretations of the Second Vatican Council's theological documents. In this case, the bloody conflict in Mindanao was "the external context," which is part of the hermeneutic of peace, and was critical in shaping the Catholic leaders' theological approach to their decisions. Because Mindanao is a plural and diverse society, inter-religious tensions led the Catholic leaders in Mindanao to become more open to interfaith dialogue as a means to achieve peace and reconciliation, compared to Catholics leaders in other parts of the Philippines.

The second document that I review is the PhD dissertation of Jerson Benia Narciso, who completed it for a doctoral degree in Inter-Religious Studies at Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia. Narciso's dissertation is titled *Christianity and Islam in the Search for Peace in Southern Philippines*,[191] of which I wish to highlight its most pivotal findings. First, unlike LaRousse, who only focused on researching the role of the Catholic Church in promoting peace through interfaith dialogue, Narciso skilfully surveyed the role of all formal or official religious institutions in the Philippines that contribute to peacebuilding. The official religious organisations are the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the Philippines Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID), the Ulama League of the Philippines (ULP), and the Bishop-Ulama Conference of the Philippines (BUC).[192]

Narciso comprehensively described the history, vision and mission, membership, theological construction, and programmes and activities that were organised by each formal religious institution to contribute to peace and conflict resolution in Mindanao. Narciso also criticized and provided recommendations to those organisations on how to improve their engagement in the peace process in Mindanao. He identified problems that required a resolution within and between religious organisations to enable them to increase their contribution to solving Mindanao's problems, such as "negative competition" within and between organisations, mistrust, elitism, and an absence of a clear unified theological and political agenda for peace.[193]

Realising the substantial amount of research on the contributions of formal or official religious organisations to peacebuilding in the Philippines, including Narciso's prominent work, I

[191] Narciso, "Christianity and Islam in the Search for Peace in Southern Philippines'."
[192] Ibid., 104-55.
[193] Ibid., 162-72.

choose to identify alternative trajectories in my research. Although I have interviewed religious leaders who represent the CBCP, NCCP, PCID, and BUC during my fieldwork in Manila and Mindanao, I do not intend to write about the role of those official religious organisations in peacebuilding because other scholars have already achieved that task. Instead, I use those interviews to broaden my perspective on how religious leaders and organisations understand the conflict and how they respond to the conflict. As I have already discussed in the methods section, I examine how theological arguments that were constructed and shaped mainly by those official organisations, became operational and materialised in the micro-cases that I choose in Mindanao. By choosing the three micro-cases, I have greater opportunity to reflect deeply on how religious resources that are used by religious leaders and institutions contribute to peacebuilding.

Secondly, Narciso also identified crucial theological concepts within Christianity and Islam that can be utilised as theological justifications for the peaceful resolution of the Mindanao conflict. In Christianity, he identified numerous key concepts in the Gospels, such as the hermeneutics of the Kingdom of God, *Shalom* (a Hebrew concept), and *Eirene* (a Greek concept) that can be used as theological foundations to build peace. In Islam, he also identified several critical theological concepts, such as *tawhid, taqwa, jihad,* and *iman* as principles that can be utilised for peace.

Narciso's identification of theological concepts in Christianity and Islam as religious resources for peacebuilding is strategically critical. However, whereas in my research, I also seek theological arguments in religion that can be used to contribute to peacebuilding, I pursue a methodological approach that differs from that of Narciso. As a theologian who was conducting research on inter-religious studies, Narciso developed critical concepts in Christianity and Islam, such as the Kingdom of God or *tawhid*, based on his theological investigation, which he *assumed* Christians and Muslims could use as a theological foundation for the practical social, cultural, and political transformation in Mindanao. In contrast, my focus is on how religious people on the ground actually use religious resources, including theological arguments from sacred texts and traditions that they have already used and practiced, to support and motivate their engagement in peacebuilding. In other words, whereas Narciso constructed his argument through a "top-down process," I choose to build my argument through a "bottom-up process."

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature that is relevant to the research problem and established the overall trajectory of the thesis. In the first part of this chapter, I demonstrated two crucial facts. Firstly, religion is not a new consideration in IR and PCRS. However, four significant factors led to ignoring religion in IR and PCRC: the political myth of the Westphalia settlement and the

Enlightenment presumptions concerning religion, the strong influence of the modernisation and secularization perspectives, the domination of the realist, neo-realist, or structural realist perspectives, and the use of behaviourism and quantitative methodology. Subsequently, I noticed that three new developments within IR and PCRS (the idea of non-state actors' diplomacy, peacebuilding from below, and the question of culture) helped create the opportunity and momentum to recognise the contribution of religion in peacebuilding.

Secondly, I also identified a substantial amount of literature on religion, conflict, and peace, which can be grouped into three categories: the secular-atheist, the religious-violence, and the religious-peacebuilding perspectives. As I demonstrated in this section, the religious-peacebuilding perspective has slowly established itself in IR and PCRS debates. The thesis extends upon the existing religious peacebuilding perspective literature.

In the second part of this chapter, I showed that, in general, the research on the conflict in Maluku and Mindanao follows the religious-violence perspective, which is largely influenced by the secular paradigm, which, in turn, primarily includes a perception of religion as source of the conflict that has little to do with peace. This type of argument was presented especially by scholars who conducted research *on conflict* in Maluku and who see the instrumentalisation of religion by elites as one of the principal causes of the conflict. However, changing conflict dynamics also gradually changed the manner in which scholars viewed religion. In the literature on the post-conflict situation in Maluku, scholars, especially Sumanto, have begun to perceive the potential role of religion for peacebuilding. However, this research topic remains extremely underdeveloped.

The intractable, four-decade long conflict in Mindanao appears to have been the context for research on the role of religion in peacebuilding, whereas the secular paradigm still influences most research. The two scholarly works that I reviewed have substantially contributed to the analysis of religion and peacebuilding. Nevertheless, they still have limitations because they were either too descriptive or insufficiently analytical, and did not directly examine how various religious resources were used to contribute to peacebuilding.

CHAPTER 3

Methods and Cases

Having discussed the literature that is related to this research, in this chapter, I discuss the methodology and introduce the cases that I employed to investigate the contribution of religion to peacebuilding in Maluku and Mindanao. Spesifically, I first discuss the method, approach, data collection techniques, respondents, and fieldwork report in the methodology section and clarify concepts and terms that I used in this research. In the second section, I introduce the two case studies that I used in this research: Maluku, in Indonesia, and Mindanao, in the Philippines.

3.1 Methodology

To answer the research question of how Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia, this research included the use of qualitative methods to provide 'an insight on how people make sense of their experiences that cannot be easily provided by other methods.'[194] Qualitative methods 'provide meanings and interpretation, concepts, definitions, metaphors, symbols and description of things.'[195] Qualitative methods were used to examine how religious peacebuilders understood, conceptualised, and defined religion, and used the spirit and practices of religion for concrete peacebuilding activities.

I used a case study approach in this research. According to Berg, a case study is not a technique for collecting data, but a methodological approach that uses numerous data-gathering techniques.[196] Moreover, case studies allowed me to obtain information about individuals, groups, organisations, and social settings, and to interpret how they operated. Champion, cited by Berg, argued that data and information gathered from this method is extremely rich, detailed, and in-depth.[197]

In this research, I employed multiple case studies; specifically, I chose Maluku (Indonesia) and Mindanao (the Philippines) as case studies. Some scholars argued that *multiple case studies* require other forms of methodology, such as a "comparative methodology." However, according to Yin, single or multiple case studies are simply a design variant of the case study that was method.[198]

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[194] Pranee Liamputtong and Douglas Ezzy, *Qualitative Research Methods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[195] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitaive Research Methods for Social Sciences* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 3.
[196] Ibid., 225.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009), 53.

Yin argued that multiple case studies are more compelling and robust,[199] and Berg noted that multiple case studies offer a superior understanding and the opportunity to enhance theoretical frameworks.[200]

3.1.1 Data Collection

In this research, I used three data gathering techniques. First, I employed library and document research. I gathered information from books, reports, and media, and from the internal documents of various organisations, such as organisational profiles, strategic planning, vision and mission statements, programmes, organisational progress reports, and evaluation papers. I analysed these documents to develop an understanding of the dynamics, goals, approaches, and activities of the religious peacebuilders across the two case studies.[201] Moreover, the library and document research provided basic information about the organisations and leaders whom I interviewed. This data and information allowed me to formulate and further clarify critical questions, when I employed the second data gathering technique, concerning the activities that religious organisations and leaders conducted.

Second, I employed in-depth interviews in this research. According to Ezzy and Liamputtong, the aim of in-depth interviews is to understand the complexity of social and political interaction within which meanings and interpretations are created. According to them, in-depth interviews bear a closer similarity to conversations than to structured questions.[202] However, I started my interviews by asking basic questions, such as the following: (1) How long you have been involved in peacebuilding activities? (2) How does religion influence your work in peacebuilding? (3) Specifically, what sorts of religious resources (e.g., personal faith, sacred texts, religious networks, system of communications, education and training, and schools or *madrasahs*) strongly motivate you or your organisation to work on peacebuilding? Following these questions, I asked for further detail and discussed questions such as the following: (1) Does religion affect your personal involvement in peacebuilding work? (If so, in what ways?); (2) What concrete peacebuilding activities did you or your organisation complete or are currently undertaking? (I also prompted for details on each activity). I asked other questions as the interview evolved.

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[199] Ibid.

[200] Berg, *Qualitaive Research Methods for Social Sciences*, 229.

[201] Besides having access to the University of Queensland library, I was also fortunate to have an access to Ateneo De Manila University library, when I became a Visiting Research Associate at the Institute of Philippines Culture at the University. With help from friends, I could also access the library in Notre Dame University (NDU) in Cotabato. Accessing the libraries of Ateneo and NDU was critical for my research because they held academic materials that I could not access from Australia.

[202] Ezzy, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 57.

I assessed and clarified data by triangulating the responses of the respondents. I also verified their responses by other means, where possible. For example, I conducted interviews with numerous former participants of training and seminar programmes, asking them about their experience of the extent and nature of religious understanding and motivation in these programmes. Where necessary, in some cases, I arranged a second follow-up interview with these respondents to clarify their responses. Furthermore, I also kept in touch with many of my respondents through emails, phone calls, text messages, and social media, such as Facebook, allowing me to clarify any questions or ambiguities that I had regarding the research data and findings.

During the interviews, I noted crucial and relevant information on my fieldwork diary. I also digitally recorded the interviews with the consent of the respondents. I reviewed and selectively transcribed the interviews in developing the analysis for the thesis.

Thirdly, by drawing on the ethnographic tradition, I used participant observation techniques to gather data.[203] Researchers usually employ participant observation to improve their understanding of the research participants or respondents in their socio-cultural context[204] because it allows researchers to become more closely acquainted with the respondents' daily life experiences and activities.[205] Because I could not spend extensive time with research participants, I took whatever opportunities became available to facilitate ethnographic observations: I participated in various programmes and activities during my fieldwork, including the Mindanao Week of Peace, and informal meetings, seminars, musical performances, and religious preaching, and ceremonies.

3.1.2 Respondents

Careful selection of respondents was crucial in answering my research questions. Because the aim of my research is to investigate the role of religion in peacebuilding and to examine how religious communities in Maluku and Mindanao used religious resources for peacebuilding, I interviewed, firstly, religious leaders who formally represented official religious organisations. In Maluku, I interviewed eight leaders of *Gereja Protestan Maluku* (Protestant Church in the Moluccas) (GPM). The GPM is the strongest and most effectively structured Protestant religious institution in Maluku. In addition to the GPM, I also interviewed three Catholic leaders of the Diocese of Amboina, and leaders from the Muslim community from three organisations: *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), *Muhammadiyah*, and the Indonesian *Ulama* Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) (MUI). The three

[203] See, for example, Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* Second ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).
[204] Rachel I. Fretz Robert M. Emerson, Linda L. Shaw, "Participant Obsevation and Fieldnotes," in *Handbook of Ethnography*, ed. Amanda Coffey Paul Atkinson, Sara Delamont, John Lofland, Lyn Lofland (Los Angeles Sage Publications, 2007), 352.
[205] Ezzy, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 169.

organisations are local or provincial branches of influential national Muslim organisations in Indonesia. I interviewed three leaders of MUI, four leaders of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), and five leaders of *Muhammadiyah*.

In the Philippines, I also interviewed leaders from official religious institutions. From the Christian organisations, I interviewed one leader of Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in Manila, three Catholic leaders in Zamboanga City, and one leader of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). From the Muslim organisations, I interviewed two leaders of the *Ulama* League of the Philippines and two leaders of the National *Ulama* Council of the Philippines (NUCP). I included the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), as a Muslim official religious organisation or group for the reasons that I discuss in detail in Chapter 8. I interviewed eight leaders and members of the Front. In short, I interviewed 35 respondents in Maluku and 43 respondents in Mindanao.[206]

In addition to official religious organisations, I also interviewed respondents from informal or unofficial religious institutions, such as groups, foundations, or non-governmental organisations that did not have structural relations with the mentioned formal religious institutions. Rather, specific religious affiliations strongly influenced the vision and mission of these institutions. Interfaith groups were included among them. I interviewed five activists of *Lembaga Antar Iman Maluku* (LAIM) (Maluku Interfaith Foundation); four people in Wayame; three people in Seith; three activists of the Philippines Centre for Islam and Democracy (PCID); two leaders of the Bishop-*Ulama* Conference (BUC); 18 activists and alumni of Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM); and four activist of Peace Advocate Zamboanga (PAZ). I included in this category eight activists and people, whom I interviewed, in Nalapaan Space for Peace.

In addition to respondents from official and unofficial organisations, I also interviewed people in Maluku and Mindanao from various professions, such as Raja Kampung (village chief), teachers, journalists, human and women's rights activists, and government officials. I interviewed them to gain a greater understanding of the contribution of official and official religious organisations to peacebuilding.

I should highlight from the outset, as I revealed in my review of the literature in Chapter 2, that scholars have conducted substantial research on the role of official religious organisations in peacebuilding in Mindanao. Therefore, unlike the case study of Maluku, I did not write a specific chapter on the contribution of official religious organisations in Mindanao to peacebuilding.

[206] See List of Interviews in the appendix section of this thesis.

3.1.3 Fieldwork

In order to conduct in-depth interviews and engage in participant observation in the most optimal manner, I organised five periods of fieldwork across two fieldwork sites. This included three periods of fieldwork in Maluku (Indonesia) and two periods of fieldwork in Mindanao (the Philippines). However, I faced difficulties in organising the fieldwork because of institutional guidelines regarding travelling to Maluku and Mindanao. Fieldwork was delayed for approximately three months because of the University of Queensland's travel restrictions, which are linked to a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) policy. My fieldwork sites, according to DFAT's travel warnings, fell in the categories of "reconsider your need of travel" (in Indonesia overall) and "do not travel" (in Mindanao). Finally, through complicated procedures, I received approval from the Deputy Vice Chancellor International to conduct the fieldwork.

I conducted the first period of fieldwork in Indonesia (mainly in Maluku, but also in Jakarta) over a period of seven weeks (from 24 June 2011 to 14 August 2011). During this fieldwork period, I conducted interviews and participated in numerous programmes that were organised by NGO's in Ambon City. My participation in the programmes allowed me to improve my understanding of the dynamics of Malukan society during the post-conflict situation.

I conducted the second fieldwork period in the Philippines primarily in Mindanao, but also in Manila, where I spent approximately five weeks (from 16 November 2011 to 24 December 2011). The fieldwork in eight cities in Mindanao (Zamboanga City, Basilan, Davao City, Cotabato City, Pikit, Kidapawan, and Marawi City) was extremely intensive. I conducted the fieldwork during the Mindanao Week of Peace, which is a yearly event that civil society groups organise with the support of local governments. The Week of Peace, therefore, provided me with an excellent opportunity to not only meet and arrange interviews with peace activists and other potential participants but also to participate in the various peace programmes that were organised during this event.

I conducted the third fieldwork period on my way back from Manila to Brisbane, when I stopped by in Jakarta for a one-week period. I was motivated to visit Ambon City in particular, following the outbreak of communal violence on 11 September 2011. There, I met key informants to gain their insights on the events that had occurred and on how the religious peacebuilders managed to localise and contain the outburst of the violence to prevent it from spreading to other places, just as had occurred in the conflicts of 1999.

Between the end of 2012 and the beginning of 2014, I visited Mindanao and Maluku for my fourth and fifth fieldwork periods, respectively. Unlike the previous fieldwork periods, during these periods, each of which was approximately three weeks long, I could focus on uncovering specific information that I needed to enrich my understanding, which I outlined in the draft of the Mindanao

and Maluku case study chapters of this thesis. For example, I conducted follow-up interviews with some respondents to clarify information or I interviewed new respondents, such as the alumni of training programmes that was organised by religious institutions, to, potentially, enrich my data. I managed to meet Fr. Bert Layson, one of the animators for the Nalapaan Space for Peace in the extremely remote and small city of Colaman, in Mindanao, which I could only reach during the rainy season by riding a motorcycle for four hours.

In short, the five sessions of fieldwork that I undertook in Maluku and Mindanao allowed me to advance my understandings of peacebuilding actors and gather significant amounts of data and information for use in this thesis. Before I proceed to introduce the case studies, I turn to explain some concepts and terms that I use in this thesis.

3.1.4 Concepts and Terms

This section includes a brief explanation of concepts and terms that I use in subsequent chapters.
(1) R*eligion.* An agreed definition of religion among scholars does not exist. Martin Marty, in his landmark book, *Politics, Religion and the Common Good*, presented seventeen different definitions of religion before noting that 'scholars will never agree on the definition of religion.'[207] Charles Kimball acknowledged that defining religion is extremely difficult. However, he is optimistic that readers can understand what religion is without defining it because 'religion is a central feature of human life. We all see many indications of it every day, and we all know it when we see it.'[208] Whereas I am not as optimistic as Kimball, I will not to propose a new definition of religion for this research. In this research, I specifically examine two recognizable religions, Christianity and Islam, as the majority religions in the Philippines and Indonesia, and which, therefore, have considerable influence on people's daily lives. In essence, Muslims and Christians believe in (a) supernatural being(s), hold sacred texts that are believed to be the words of God, practice rituals, believe in life after death (e.g., the concepts of Judgment Day, paradise, and hell), and build a sense of religious community. However, by focusing "only" on Islam and Christianity, I do not mean to argue that Islam and Christian are monolithic. In this research, to be precise, I investigate how "Islams" or Muslims, and "Christianities" and Christians contribute to peacebuilding.

(2) *Religious resources*. I define religious resources as various capacities or facilities provided or offered by religion that can be used to contribute to peacebuilding. Religious resources can range from faith, spiritual and moral authority, and religious narratives to more concrete and tangible elements, such as sacred texts, schools, churches and mosques, networks, and organisations.

[207] Martin E. Marty, *Politics, Religion and the Common Good* (San Francisco, CA: Josse-Bass, 2000), 10.
[208] Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*, 6.

(3) *Peacebuilding and religious peacebuilders*. The consensus on the definition of peacebuilding is limited.[209] Peacebuilding is an elastic concept[210] and a complex and multidimensional exercise.[211] Galtung, perhaps one of the most prominent pioneering scholars in peace and conflict resolution studies (PCRS), published *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*' in 1975.[212] He defined peacebuilding as efforts to establish positive peace over negative peace, marked by not only the absence of war but also the presence of socio-political justice. Positive peace also encompasses the ability not only to overcome direct violence but also structural and cultural violence.[213]

The purposes of this research require broadening the definition of peacebuilding and the scope its activities. First, I agree with the "synergist" school of thought, which includes the argument that peacebuilding activities can be intertwined and integrated into the pre-conflict (conflict prevention) and the mid-conflict (peacekeeping and peacemaking) phases, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction phases.[214] In contrast, the "gradualist" school of thought suggests that peacebuilding can only occur during the post-conflict reconstruction phase.[215] Lederach's notion of the time dimension in peacebuilding constitutes a confirmation of the idea that peacebuilding initiatives can occur from the beginning of a conflict's formation by conducting a so-called crisis intervention (between two to six months), up to the so-called generational vision (over 20 years) in post-conflict society.[216] If peacebuilding is defined in generic terms as "building peace," all efforts and initiatives to establish positive peace and overcome direct, structural, and cultural violence can be included into peacebuilding activities. Peacebuilding ranges from short-term programmes, such as addressing immediate needs, such as food and medical supplies, to long-term projects, such as peace education, reconciliation, and trauma healing. It touches on social transformation, as well as political change.

Stemming from the mentioned elaboration of the meaning and extension of the activities of peacebuilding, *religious peacebuilders*, specifically religious adherents and leaders and religious organisations, can be viewed as conducting activities ranging from preventive diplomacy to

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[209] Charles T. Call, "Knowing Peace When You See It: Setting Standards for Peacebuilding," *Civil War* 10, no. No. 2 (2008): 174.
[210] Charles-Philippe David, "Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?," in *Approaches to Peacebuilding*, ed. Hi-Won Jeong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 18.
[211] W. Andy Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 3(2003): 241.
[212] Johan Galtung, "Three Approachess to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding," in *Essays in Peace Research* ed. Johan Galtung (Copenhagen: Chriatian Ejlers, 1975), 282-304.
[213] "Violance, Peace and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969).
[214] David, "Does Peacebuilding Build Peace?," 21.
[215] Ibid.
[216] See Diagram of An integrated Framework for Peacebuilding in Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconsilaiation in Divided Societies* 80.

peacekeeping and peacemaking, and as striving to build peace in the divided societies of conflict-torn countries by using available religious resources. They are religious activists who believe that they can use religious virtues as the spirit and energy that are needed to contextualize the religious teachings that contribute to peacebuilding. They initiate local cease-fires, conduct peace education, organise interfaith dialogues, provide education, food, and medicines for refugees, and conduct other activities, such as building mutual understanding, eliminating prejudices, and participating in truth and reconciliation committees.

(4) *Adat.* The term "*Adat*" can be translated as customary law. *Adat*, according to Cooley, has been used to guide and govern behaviours and relationships in society.[217] Cooley further explained that *adat* is 'customary usage which has been handed down from ancestors.'[218] In other words, *adat* was part of the indigenous Malukans' beliefs long before the arrival of Islam and Christianity.

(5) Pela and *gandong*. The concepts of *Pela* and *gandong* (they are commonly called *pela-gandong*, although they are two different institutions) are part of local *adat* in Maluku. *Pela* refers to 'an institusionalized bond of friendship or brotherhood between all native residents of two or more villages, which bond was established under particular circumstances and carries specific duties and privilege for the parties thus bound together.'[219] Villagers that have *pela* relations agreed to help each other during hardships such as war, natural disaster, and famine. Villages that are bound by *pela* relations might embrace different religions. *Gandong*, on the other hand, involves genealogical ties between one or two villages. *Gandong*, which derives from Bahasa Indonesia, simply means "uterus." In this context, *gandong* is stronger than *pela.* Like *pela*, villages that have *gandong* relation might embrace different religions.[220]

3.2 Introduction to Case Studies

3.2.1 Understanding the Conflict in Maluku

Maluku[221] is one of the provinces in Indonesia that is located in the eastern part of the Indonesian archipelago. Maluku covers 54,185 km^2, lies between 2^o 30´-9^o south latitude and 124^o-136^o east

[217] Frank L. Cooley, "Altar and Throne in Central Moluccan Societies: A Study of the Relationship between the Institutions of Local Government in a Traditional Society Undergoing Rapid Social Change" (The University of Yale, 1962), 131.
[218] Ibid., 153.
[219] *Ambonese Adat: A General Description* (New Haven: Yale University , Southeast Asia Studies, 1962), 71-72; ibid.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Maluku, or Moluccas, is one of the earliest provinces in Indonesia to encounter foreign powers. European adventurers called Maluku the Spice Island because it was the main producer of the "trinity of spices" (clove, nutmeg,

longitude.[222] Administratively, the Maluku province is divided into 11 regencies or cities, 90 districts, and 1,022 sub–districts or villages.[223] The five religions in Maluku are Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. According to the 2011 census, the percentages of the adherents of the three major religions were 57.6% Muslim, 32.4% Protestant, and 1.2% Catholic out of a total population of 1,703,541. In Kota Ambon, the capital city of Maluku, Protestants constitute the majority at 54.3%, followed by Muslims at 38.3%, and Catholics at 7.03%, out of a total population of 294,530, with an extremely small minority, less than 1%, of Buddhists and Hindus.[224]

The arrival of the Portuguese in 1511 marked the opening of an extensive, problematic relationship between "central and civilized" colonial powers and "peripheral and uncivilized" Malukans, which extended into the twentieth century.[225] A deeply problematic colonial legacy affects religious affairs in Maluku. Both oral and written histories reveal the problematic and traumatic historical narratives that Malukans sustain about "the others," which developed when the Europeans, in the context of the conflicting political and economic interests of the colonial powers and the local rulers, introduced their religions among the Malukan population.[226] This demonstrates that the violent conflict that occurred in 1998 had roots in nearly 500 years of history.

The religious conflict in Maluku, which is one of the two case studies that constitute the focus of this research, occurred during Indonesia's transition period to democracy,[227] which is usually cast as a democratisation success story. Those who view the Indonesia's transition period is peaceful perhaps, only considers the formal process of procedural democracy where in 1999, Indonesia held its first peaceful, democratic, free and fair election since 1995. Nevertheless, looking beyond the procedural democracy viewpoint, from 1997 to 2005, Indonesia witnessed conflicts in which approximately 19,000 people lost their lives and around 1.3 million people became internally displaced persons.[228]

The number of people who died in the Maluku conflict is unknown. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported that after approximately two years of the conflict, more than 5,000 people

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and mace) in the sixteenth century. See Leonard Y. Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 1.

[222] Statistics of Maluku Province (BPS), "Maluku in Figures 2012 (Maluku Dalam Angka 2012)," (Maluku2012), 51.

[223] Ibid., 49.

[224] I made the percentage based on data presented in ibid., 198.

[225] Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period*, 3.

[226] Ridjali, *Historie Van Hitu*, ed. Chris van Fraassen Hans Straver, Jan van der Putten (Utrecht: Landelijk Steupunt Educatie Molukkers, 2004); I. O. Nanulaitta, *Timbulnja Militerisme Ambon: Sebagai Suatu Persoalan Politik, Social-Ekonomis* (Djakarta: Bharata, 1966).

[227] For further discussion about paradox between 'beautiful promise of democracy' and the fact that the process of democratisation creates fertile soil for nationalism and ethnic conflict see Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 2000).

[228] Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratisation in Indonesia: Small Town Wars* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 4.Klinken's estimation based on his interpretation on UNSFIR and World Bank data.

were dead and 500,000 people had been displaced.[229] The conflict caused both incalculable costs in infrastructure damage and the creation of a "lost generation" because, in numerous areas, many children were unable to attend school and suffered from malnutrition.

The conflict in Maluku started on 19 January 1999 when Muslims were celebrating *I'dul Fitr*, the Muslim festival marking the end of the fasting month of *Ramadhan*. This day, which was supposed to be a happy day not only for Muslims but also for Christians,[230] turned into a day sorrow and tragedy. A street brawl between a Christian mini-bus driver and a Muslim youth—brawls are an extremely common occurrence in Ambon—turned into a religious riot and quickly spread to other parts of Ambon City.

Two different versions exist about how the brawl began. The different versions indicate how each community has its own version to prove that its members were in the right and that they were the victims, and that the members of the other community were the perpetrators.[231] According to the Christian version, two Muslim youths, one of whom was named Salim, wanted to force a minibus driver, Yopy (a Christian from Aboru), to give them money. The driver refused to pay and a fight ensued.[232] According to the Muslim version (the police officials, apparently, used this version), Yopy was the driver of a mini-bus that was owned by a Muslim, and Salim was the conductor of the minibus. Yopy had subsequently rented the minibus to someone. Acting on behalf of the owner, Salim asked for the money that Yopy had received from renting the mini-bus. Yopy refused and threatened Salim. Eventually, the passengers of the mini-bus, who were also Christians, assaulted Salim, who then ran to Batu Merah Bawah (a Muslim village) to ask his friends for support. The two groups, Salim's friends (Muslims) and the bus driver's friends (Christians) fought and the conflict escalated into other parts of Ambon City.[233]

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[229] This figure includes the umber of people died in North Maluku province which before 1999 was part of the Maluku province International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos in Maluku," (19 December 2000), 5.

[230] In Ambon, it was common practice for Christians to visit their Muslim friends' houses to celebrate *I'dul Fithr* together. Conversely, Muslims also visit Christians' houses during Christmas and New Year. Numerous respondents recalled this peaceful and tolerant practice of the Ambonese before the conflict erupted.

[231] As can be seen below, each religious group has its own version on how the conflict started. Christians established a formal team called *Tim Pengacara Gereja* (the Church Lawyers Team), which was established by the Synod of Protestant Church in Maluku (GPM), and Catholic Diocese in Ambon (Uskup Amboina) to investigate and produce a chronology of the events. Conversely, Muslim also established *Posko Penanggulangan Idul Fitri Berdarah*, which also produced a chronology of conflict based on Muslim accounts. The Provincial Leadership of Justice Party (DPW *Partai Keadilan*), an Islamic political party, also made chronology entitled *"Kronologi Ied Berdarah"* that confirmed facts and findings found by *Posko Penaggulangan Idul Fitri Berdarah*. I regard the chronology that was developed by Human Rights Watch to be more balanced than the chronology that the religious institutions advanced because it covered both of the version that religious groups offered. The HRW report is also widely cited in research about Maluku.

[232] See the *Chronology of Ambon Conflict* by *Tim Pengacara Gereja* (the Church Lawyers Team). In addition, local NGOs, such as Yayasan Sawalaku, produced similar accounts. They can be read at http://www.fica.org/hr/ambon/idKronologisKerusuhanAmbonSept1999.html.

[233] For more detail see Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Indonesia: The Violence in Ambon," (1999). p. 14-1; DPW PK Maluku (Justice Party), "Kronologi Ied Berdarah," (1999).

Within hours, the brawl that started in Batu Merah Bawah spread to Mardhika, Silale, Waihaong, Kuda Mati, Batu Gantong, and Waringin.[234] The riots continued overnight, when Muslims and Christians attacked each other.

In the early morning of the second day of fighting (20 January 1999), Christians had set fire to all the major markets in the city. These were mostly owned by Muslim migrants from Bugis, Buton, and Makassar (popularly dubbed the BBM), such as the Pelita shopping area, the Gambus and Mardika markets, the Mardika fruit market, and the Cakar Bongkar food market. The houses of the Butonese Muslim settlement around the Gambus market were also burned down, as well as the Al-Hilal, a Muslim school.[235]

Still on the second day of fighting, Muslims from villages in the Laihitu Paninsula (Hila, Hitu Lama, Hitu Mesing, Mamala, Morela, Negeri Lima, Seith, and Wakal) marched toward Ambon City. They had been provoked by a rumour that the Al-Fatah mosque (one of the most significant symbols of the Muslim presence in Maluku) was burnt down and that Christians had massacred numerous Muslims.[236] It was reported that "the crowd stretched for more than a kilometre."[237] On their way to Ambon City, the Muslim crowd passed the villages of Telaga Kodok, Benteng Karang, Hanut, Durian Patah, Waiheru, Nania, and Negeri Lama.[238] The rioters wore white cloth on their arms (a symbol for Muslims) shouting *takbir* (*Allahu Akbar*, God is Great) and shouted "Kill them! Kill them!" They burnt down churches, homes, and killed numerous Christian who lived in those villages.[239] When I visited Benteng Karang in 2011, I still could see the ruins of Christian houses. The Mobile Police Brigade (*Brimob*) in Air Besar stopped the Muslim crowd and dispersed it to the Laihitu Peninsula. An even greater degree of violence and death could have occurred had the Muslims been able to continue their march to Ambon City because they would have passed by Passo, a stronghold of the Christian community. At the end of January and in early February 1999, the conflict spread to cities and villages outside Ambon: to the Island of Manipa on 24 January 1999, to Ceram and Saparua on 3 February 1999, and to Haruku Island on 13 February 1999.[240]

Contrary to the common perception, the conflict in Maluku was not a constant war. The war was intermittent and sporadic. It occurred in phases and stages. People in Maluku and scholars

[234] KontraS, an independent NGO based in Jakarta, reports that only less then two hours after the riot erupted in Batumerah area, the mobilisation of mass in many part of Ambon has already happened see KontraS (The Comission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence), "Report on Riot in Ambon " (Jakarta: KontraS, 1999). Also see; International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos in Maluku."
[235] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Indonesia: The Violence in Ambon." p. 1; Party), "Kronologi Ied Berdarah; Yayasan Salawaku, "Kronologis Kerusuhan Maluku (Ambon)," (1999).
[236] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Indonesia: The Violence in Ambon," 20.
[237] Ibid., 21.
[238] Ibid; Salawaku, "Kronologis Kerusuhan Maluku (Ambon)."
[239] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Indonesia: The Violence in Ambon," 20-22.
[240] Ibid., 26-27.

described the conflict phases differently.[241] Trijono, an Indonesian scholar who intensively researched the conflict, gave a particularly useful account of the phases of the conflict. He divided the conflict into three phases. During the first phase, from 19 January to approximately April 1999, the violence had stopped before the national election on 7 June 1999 and the election was held peacefully. During the second phase, from 24 July 1999, when the election results were announced, to 26 December 1999, the conflict spread to North Maluku. The third phase began on 26 April 2000, when Laskar Jihad (Troops for Jihad) from outside of Maluku arrived in Ambon to help their Muslim brothers and sisters.[242] This fighting occurred intermittently until February 2002, when the Malino Peace Agreement was signed by the government, as well as by Muslim and Christian leaders. After the Malino Peace Agreement, some bombings and shootings still occurred; however, no large-scale fighting occurred, with the exception of a riot on 25 April 2004.

Scholars have been particularly interested to investigate Trijono's second and third phases of the conflict. In the second phase, the conflict spread to North Maluku, a newly established province that split from Maluku in 1998. Provoked by news that Muslims had burned down the Silo Church in Ambon City, one of the oldest churches that symbolised the presence of Christians in Maluku, in the late December 1999, Christians massacred hundreds of Muslims in Tobelo, including a substantial number of Muslims who had taken refuge in the Al-Ikhlas mosque in Togaliwa village.[243]

This notorious event was broadly publicised in the "Islamic media," consisting of books, CDs, and pamphlets. Consequently, the violence in Tobelo led to the establishment of Laskar Jihad (the Troop of Jihad, or "LJ"),[244] which brought a new dynamic in the conflict and marked Trijono's third stage of conflict. The presence of LJ in Maluku not only changed the conflict dynamics but was also became a precedent for a new phenomenon in modern Indonesian history. For the first time, a religious paramilitary group declared their involvement in religious conflict. LJ was established by Ja'far Umar Thalib, a leader of the Salafi movement in Indonesia who had joined *mujahidin* (holy warriors) in the battlefields in Afghanistan. Following a gathering at the Senayan Stadium in Jakarta in early April 2000, LJ published an open call for people to join their group. LJ opened a paramilitary camp in Bogor to prepare Muslims for *jihad* in Maluku and Poso. In late May

[241] Lambang, NGO's such as Lerai and Kontras define difference stages and phases of conflic in Ambon. See Trijono, *Keluar Dari Kemelut Maluku*.
[242] Ibid., 35-66.
[243] Chris Wilson, *Ethno-Religious Violence in Indonesia: From Soil to God* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 114.
[244] Noorhaidi Hassan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia* (New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2006); Robert W. Hefner, "Muslim Democrats and Islamist Violence in Post-Soeharto Indonesia," in *Remaking Muslim Politics: Pluralism, Contestation, Democratisation*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005).

2000, around 3,000 members of LJ left Java for Maluku.[245] Although other groups also organised the mobilisation of non-local jihadist fighters to Maluku, such as KOMPAK, Jama'ah Islamiyah, and Brigade Hizbullah, LJ was 'the largest and best organised group sending voluntary jihad fighters to the Moluccas.'[246] In short, the influx of non-local religious fighters in Maluku prolonged the conflict and made its religious dimensions considerably more obvious and explicit.

After a long process of negotiation and mediation, 35 Christian leaders (Protestant and Catholic) and 35 Muslim leaders, together with the government, signed *Perjanjian Maluku di Malino* (Maluku Agreement in Malino) on 12 February 2002. The agreement did not stop the violence in Maluku immediately. Indeed, the signing of the agreement sparked a new controversy among those in both Muslim and Christian communities who opposed a peaceful resolution. The comprehensive implementation of the agreement (such as the departure of Laskar Jihad from Maluku, the decommissioning of weapons, and the rehabilitation of refugees) were additional controversial issues that occasionally provoked outbursts of violence. However, in general, the situation in Maluku was considerably more peaceful after the signing of the agreement. After the Malino Agreement, two relatively major incidences of unrest occurred in Ambon City. The first eruption of violence occurred on 25 April 2004 when some Christians celebrated the 54th anniversary of the formation of the rebel group called the Republic of the South Moluccas (*Republik Maluku Selatan*) (RMS), provoking a reaction from Muslims who believed that the RMS represented the Christians' political agenda in Maluku. Two churches and a Muslim school and hundreds of homes were burned to the ground. Approximately 10,000 people were displaced and 38 others were killed.[247] The second incident of unrest occurred on 11 September 2011 where the death of a Muslim motorcycle taxi driver in Gunung Nona (a Christian village) turned into an inter-communal riot.[248] This unrest resulted in seven dead, 65 wounded,[249] in the burning of 150 homes, and the displacement of 4,000 people. [250]

In recent times, the situation in Maluku has become relatively peaceful, with an occasional outbreak of violence. People from different religious backgrounds interact freely in markets, government offices, schools and universities, coffee shops, banks and other public services. However, most people are still living in segregated villages: *kampong muslim* (Islam) and *kampung sarane* (Christian). Prejudices and stigmas about "the other" remain. People have not yet fully healed from their social traumas. The latest unrest (11 September 2011) shows how fragile the peace in Maluku is, where trivial matters could provoke considerable problems.

[245] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos in Maluku," 8-9.
[246] Hassan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia*, 17.
[247] International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: Violence Erupts Again in Ambon," (17 May 2004).
[248] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Trouble Again in Ambon," (4 October 2011).
[249] Tribun News.com, "Korban Tewas Di Ambon Jadi 7 Orang," (2011).
[250] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Trouble Again in Ambon."

The Malukans have experienced the effects of violent conflict over numerous years. Whereas this experience has been traumatic and has contributed to the current segregation, it is also possible that it has produced a situation where Mulakans are less likely to be easily provoked into violence. The unrest in Ambon, although strongly loaded with religious sentiments, settled down within days and only occurred in specific areas in Ambon City. Fears that the unrest will re-ignite the deadly communal violence that occurred between 1999 and 2002 have not been borne out. Secondly, the government and NGO's have implemented numerous post-conflict peacebuilding programmes and activities. However, considerably more work is necessary to establish a durable and sustainable peace.

3.2.2 Understanding the Conflict in Mindanao

Mindanao is the name of the second largest island in the Philippines, and is located in the Southern part of the country. The island stretches from 121°26'9.66" to 126°35'50.55" East, and from 5°22'10.35" to 9°48'21.36" North. Mindanao used to be inhabited predominantly by Muslims. However, nowadays, following the systematic policies[251] of successive colonial powers of Spain and the United States, as well as the policies of the post-independence Philippines government, Muslims have become a minority.[252] For example, Tuminez shows that in 1903 Muslims constituted 76% of the total population in Mindanao, decreasing dramatically to 23% in 1960. In 1980, Muslims comprised 16.8%, whereas Christians constituted 76.7% of the population, with tribal groups composing the remaining 6.4%.[253] The latest data shows that Roman Catholics are the dominant religious affiliation at 60.9%, whereas Islam comprised 20.44%. Protestant groups are the third largest religious affiliation, comprising groups such as Evangelicals (5.35%). Anglipayan (2.16%), Iglesia ni Cristo (1.66%), and Seventh Day Adventists (1.65%).[254] These religious demographics are significant, because, as with the case of Maluku, religion played a key role in fuelling the Mindanao conflict.

[251] For more detail see Reynaldo M. Aquino, "Land Ownership and Migration: Impact on the Muslim Secessionist Conflict in the Southern Philippines" (Naval Postgraduate School, 2009).
[252] Tuminez, "This Land Is Our Land: Moro Ancestral Domain and Its Implications for Peace and Development in the Southern Philippines," 80.
[253] Michael A. Costello, "The Demography of Mindanao," in *Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise*, ed. R. J May Mark Tuner, Lulu R. Turner (Quezon: New Day Publisher, 1992), 40. Beside Muslim, there are indigenous/tribal people of Mindanao, popularly called Lumads. Nowadays Lumads are the most minority ethno-religious group in Mindanao. The Lumad that consist of eighteen ethno-linguistic groups are also part of marginalised people in Mindanao. For further reading see B. R. Rodil, "Ancestral Domain: A Central Issue in the Lumad Struggle for Self-Determination in Mindanao," ibid. (Quezon City: New Day Publishers), 233-34.
[254] See http://www.census.gov.ph/content/mindanao-comprised-about-24-percent-philippines-total-population, (accessed on 10 October 2013).

The conflict in Mindanao, which started in the early 1970s, is widely known as a Muslim or *Moro*[255] separatist or secessionist conflict.[256] The conflict is 'the world's longest-standing armed conflict'.[257] The accuracy of the data on how many people died or were internally displaced because of the conflict is open to debate. However, it is broadly estimated that the conflict has claimed approximately 160,000 lives.[258]

Numerous scholars have argued that the conflict has centuries-old historical roots that are traceable to wars between (Christian) Spanish colonisers and Muslim sultanates that occurred within a 333-year period.[259] The wars produced deep-seated prejudices among Filipinos, especially because of the use of religious language in the wars. The Spaniards, who successfully Christianised the native people from the north, mobilised them for the war in Mindanao. As Rodil noted, expeditions against Muslims were framed as 'just war[s] or holy war[s] against [the] wicked sons of the Qur'an,' and soldiers were encouraged to "have no fear in their hearts because they were supported and protected by fury of the God of armies."[260] During my fieldwork, I found that mutual distrust and animosity between Christians and Muslims could be traced to the conflict with colonial powers. Christian friends still remember how they grew up with the prejudices that were created during the American colonial period, which were summed up with the expression "the only good Moro is dead Moro." Others recalled that their parents would scare them by saying that they would be taken by Moro pirates if they did not stop being naughty or crying.

However, deep-seated historical burdens and prejudices were not the only reasons for the creation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which was the first Muslim group in the Philippines that engaged in armed struggle. Specifically, the establishment of the MNLF was the result of the accumulation of problems that Muslims faced in Mindanao in the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s. Two critical events, in particular, triggered the establishment of the MNLF.[261] The first event was the Jabidah massacre, where the Philippines Armed Forces killed

[255] The term *Moro*, to which is added the prefix *bangsa* (the Malay term for *nation*) to form *Bangsamoro*, was created the Spanish colonists. The Spanish colonists associated Muslim people living in the southern Philippines with the North African Moors, the Muslim occupiers of the Iberian Peninsula several centuries earlier. For Spaniards, the term "Moro" had negative connotations; however, now the term has been used as socio, cultural, and political identity by Muslims in Mindanao.

[256] Noble, "Muslim Separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The Making of a Stalemate," 1097.

[257] Peter Kreuzer and Rainer Werning, "The Zig-Zag Path from War to Peace: Renouncing Pacification in Favor of Peace-Building," in *Voices from Moro Land: Perspectives from Stakeholders and Observers on the Conflict in the Southern Philippines*, ed. Peter Kreuzer and Rainer Werning (Petaling Jaya: SIRD, 2007), xvii.

[258] Jonathan Adams, "Elusive Peace in Mindanao," *Far Eastern Economic Review* Jan/Feb 2009.

[259] Rodil, *A Story of Mindanao and Sulu in Question and Answer*, 3; Noble, "Muslim Separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The Making of a Stalemate," 1098; Sidney Glazer, "The Moros as a Political Factor in the Philippines Independence," *Pacific Affairs* 14, no. 1 (1941): 70.

[260] Rodil, *A Story of Mindanao and Sulu in Question and Answer*, 27.

[261] Noble, "Muslim Separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The Making of a Stalemate," 1098.

approximately thirty Muslims in Corregidor Island.[262] The second event was the 1971 general election, which reflected a shift in political power from Muslims to Christians in the region that was caused by the influx of Christian immigrants from the north of the Philippines. This new political configuration disrupted the traditional economic and political system in which Muslims previously enjoyed a majority status.[263] More importantly, the election campaign was accompanied by open conflict between Muslims and Christians. During that time, some Muslims formed armed groups that were identified as "barracudas" or "black shirts," whereas Christians also established a group called *Illagas* (rats). The declaration of martial law by President Marcos facilitated the formation of the MNLF, which became more organised and enjoyed popular support, while the government committed gross human rights violations.[264] Fr. Mercado succinctly described the Mindanao conflict as follows:

> The Mindanao conflict has been with us since the 17th century. It is a continuing struggle of a minority people against various forms of political, economic, and cultural assimilation, which they perceive as weakening or destroying the religious, cultural, political traditions of Moro society.[265]

Several attempts were made to resolve the Mindanao conflict through peaceful means. Pressure from oil-producing countries, especially the Libyan government, produced the Tripoli Agreement in the late 1976, which was signed by the Philippines government (GPH) and MNLF. The agreement provided a general framework for a ceasefire, a peace settlement, and autonomy for Bangsamoro[266] in thirteen provinces and nine cities. However, the agreement was never fully implemented and, therefore, it did not solve the underlying problems in Mindanao. The conflict continued despite the ceasefire agreements that had already been established.[267]

In 1977, because of internal conflict within the MNLF, some MNLF leaders established a new liberation movement called the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). As the name suggests, the MILF is more religiously oriented than the MNLF.[268] The establishment of the MILF saw the development of what is, according to ICG, "the country's largest and best armed insurgent

[262] "The Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines," 408.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Ibid., 405.
[265] Eliseo R. Mercado, *The Moro People's Struggle for Self-Determination*, ed. Mark Tuner; R. J May; Lulu R. Turner, Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise (Quezon City: New Day Publisher, 1992), 157.
[266] See footnote 47.
[267] On October 1977, the Philippine army launched a full-scale attack in Sulu after the MNLF assassinated a brigadier general and 34 soldiers. According to an MNLF source, the assassination was reaction of the killing of an MNLF's leader and his family. See Noble, "Muslim Separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The Making of a Stalemate," 1102.
[268] Liow, *Muslim Resistance in Southern Thailand and Southern Philippines: Religion, Ideology and Politics*, 12.

organisation,"[269] and led to the wider conflict becoming more complicated and, thus, difficult to resolve.

After the collapse of the Marcos regime in 1986, the new president, Corazon Aquino, resumed talks with the MILF, leading to the Jeddah Accord, which highlighted the commitment of the two parties to continue peace negotiations. The two parties did not reach any agreements in subsequent meetings. However, in November 1989, the GPH moved unilaterally to organise a constitutionally based plebiscite that the MNLF had not endorsed. After the plebiscite, the GPH established the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which, as with the Tripoli Agreement, has not yet been fully implemented. The intractable conflict, therefore, continued sporadically.

In 1992, Fidel Ramos, the newly elected president, resumed peace talks with MNLF by organising two exploratory talks with MNLF in Tripoli and in Cipanas, Indonesia. The long process of peace negotiation, finally, produced the so-called Final Peace Agreement that was signed on 2 September 1996. The aim of the new agreement was to fully implement the Tripoli Agreement that was signed twenty years earlier. However, the agreement, which was supposed to fulfil the implementation gap of the Tripoli agreement, failed in its implementation. As Tuminez highlighted, the ARMM, as the GPH's principal response to Moro demands and aspirations, failed to address critical matters of land, governance, and control over the Moro future. The term "autonomy," which suggested that Muslims would have a considerable degree of self-government in their land, could not be implemented. In fact, 'the ARMM was almost completely dependent on block grants and subsidies from the central government.'[270]

At the same time, Muslims became frustrated with the political manoeuvring by the MNLF, causing the MILF to gain increased public support, leading to it becoming a more, or even the most, significant player in the conflict. In 1997, the Philippines' armed forces launched a full-scale attack on the MILF's military camps. Three years later, in 2000, President Joseph Estrada launched an "all-out-war" to vanquish the MILF. With the failure of this initiative, the peace negotiations between the GPH and MILF resumed in 2001 and produced a general Agreement of Peace. However, it failed to prevent the outbreak of the Buliok War between GPH and splinter groups of the MILF in 2003. This series of wars killed thousands of people, both combatants and civilians, and resulted in hundreds of thousands of IDPs. One of the worst affected areas of those wars was Nalapaan in Pikit. While locals acted in response to the wars, the people in Nalapaan self-organised and declared their village a Space for Peace, as I demonstrate in Chapter 6, where I discuss the Mindanao case study.

[269] International Crisis Group (ICG), "The Philippines: The Breakthrough in Mindanao," (Jakarta/Brussel: ICG, 5 December 2012).
[270] Tuminez, "This Land Is Our Land: Moro Ancestral Domain and Its Implications for Peace and Development in the Southern Philippines," 82.

A year after the Buliok War, peace negotiations resumed. Since then, numerous exploratory talks, which were facilitated by the Malaysian government, were held. Numerous agreements were reached, including the framework for a ceasefire and a cessation of hostilities that welcomed the involvement of the international community through an International Monitoring Team (IMT) committee to supervise the implementation of the ceasefire agreement on the ground.

The intermittent peace talks culminated with the plan to sign a new peace treaty between GPH and MILF that was called the Memorandum of Agreement on Moro Ancestral Domain (MoA-AD or MoA) in Kuala Lumpur on 5 August 2008. However, protests from Christian politicians and leaders in Mindanao led the Philippines Supreme Court to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO).[271] The MoA was not signed and, consequently, clashes erupted in numerous parts of Mindanao. This new conflict dynamic led to the formation of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), a splinter group in MILF that was led by a former MILF field commander, Ameril Umbra Kato, whose leadership was built on the dissatisfaction of attaining the peace process outcomes in conjunction with the GPH.[272]

The failure of the MoA marked a key setback in the peace process. Peace talks could only resume in February 2011 after the election of the new president, Benigno Aquino III.[273] When I was in Cotabato, I met Mohager Iqbal, the chief of the MILF negotiation team, who had just returned from Kuala Lumpur for the 23rd Exploratory Talk, which had been held on 7 December 2011.[274] After several exploratory, which the Malaysian government was still brokering, the two parties signed the historical document called the Framework Agreement (FA) on 15 October 2012. The place of signing the agreement was extremely special: Malacanang Palace in Manila, which is a meaningful symbol of the Philippines nation. The FA is a general agreement on the establishment of a new political entity that is called the *Bangsamoro.* The FA comprises a general agreement on power sharing, revenues and wealth sharing, territory, basic rights, transition and implementation, normalization, and related miscellaneous matters.[275] As at the time of writing, which is well over a year after the signing of the FA, the parties have not yet completed the FA's annexes, which are supposed to be an integral part of the FA. In October 2013, the GPH and the MILF released a joint statement on the 41st Formal Exploratory Talks, reporting that the parties made significant

[271] Their objection to the MoA-AD was based mainly on the absence of disclosure in the peace negotiation and public consultation processes between GPH and MILF, especially towards people, mostly Christians, who would have been directly affected politically if the MoA-AD were to be implemented. Interview with Emmanuel Pinol, Kidapawan City 20 December 20012. He was former Governor of Cotabato, one of petitioners to the Supreme Court.
[272] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Back to the Table, Warily, in Mindanao," (Jakarta/Brussel: ICG, 24 March 2011), 6.
[273] Ibid., 2.
[274] My conversation with some civil society activists in Cotabato demonstrated that they were not extremely optimistic about the peace talks because they said "But, it's still better to talk than fight."
[275] For complete the FA, see http://opapp.gov.ph/resources/framework-agreement-bangsamoro-0, accessed on 10 November 2012.

progress, but the remaining annexes on power sharing and normalisation issues remain to be discussed.[276] The latest joint statement of the two parties stated that they have already signed the power-sharing agreement during the 42nd Formal Exploratory Talks and the two parties were committed to finalise the remaining annexes on January 2014.[277] This shows that the FA is moving in a positive direction.[278]

In general, the present conditions in Mindanao have been relatively peaceful since the two parties began trying to follow the FA. However, two notable incidents, besides criminal activities that are common in Mindanao, could jeopardize the peace process. The first is the invasion of Sabah (Malaysia) by the Sulu people in February 2012 over their claim that Sabah is part of the Sulu Sultanate. The clash between the followers of the 70-year-old Jamalul Kiram III, the Sultan of Sulu, and the Malaysian army resulted in 62 deaths. As reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the invasion revealed Kiram III's unhappiness at his exclusion from the peace process between the GPH and the MILF.[279] This in turn potentially weakened the position of the MILF because the question was raised as to whether the MILF truly represents *Bangsamoro*, including the people of Sulu.

The second incident pertains to the MNLF's attack of some villages in Zamboanga City when the GPH and the MILF organised the 40th exploratory talks in Kuala Lumpur in September 2013. Approximately 200 people (rebel members, military personnel, and civilians) were killed in the hostage taking and ensuing standoff. This move was believed to be a political attempt by the MNLF to jeopardize the peace negotiations being held in Kuala Lumpur.[280]

I conclude this introduction by recalling Sydney Glazer's 1941 journal article, in which he wrote that "the problem [in Mindanao] is complicated by centuries-old religious and political antagonism.'[281] One might argue that religion is not the root cause of the conflict. However, the intractable conflict and deep process of instrumentalisation of religion at the grassroots level has made the religious and political antagonism even more complicated than when Glazer wrote her article. Throughout my fieldwork in Mindanao, I found that the mutual distrust between Muslims

[276] See http://opapp.gov.ph/milf/news/gph-milf-joint-statement-41st-exploratory-talks, accessed on 30 October 2013.
[277] See http://opapp.gov.ph/resources/joint-statement-gph-milf-42nd-formal-exploratory-talks, accessed on 13 December 2013.
[278] During the finalisation of this thesis, a new positive development in the Mindanao peace process occurred. On 27 March 2014, the GPH and the MILF signed the Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro at Malacanang Palace. The signing agreement was attended by President Benigno Aquino III, Murad Ebrahim (MILF Chairman), and the Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak who formally facilitated the peace talks.
[279] See http://www.smh.com.au/world/sulu-sultan-invades-sabah-to-stake-claim-20130304-2fgu8.html, accessed on 6 March 2013.
[280] A join statement that was released by the GPH and the MILF showed that the parties would not stall the Mindanao peace process because of the standoff in Zamboanga City. See http://www.mindanews.com/top-stories/2013/09/11/gph-milf-assure-zambo-standoff-wont-derail-peace-talks-condemn-misuari/, accessed on 12 September 2013.
[281] Glazer, "The Moros as a Political Factor in the Philippines Independence," 78.

and Christian to be considerable. Prejudices and stigmas were (re)produced and transferred from one generation to the next and the tools to question them were limited and inadequate. In this context, whereas discussion at the negotiation table in Kuala Lumpur is critical for resolving "Moro problems," I argue that religious leaders and organisations have provided *numerous* opportunities for negotiation at the grassroots level, and that this has substantially contributed to breaking down the barriers that prejudices and stigmas create. In the long term, these types of efforts are what will support and foster a sustainable peace.

3.3 Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, I explained that the thesis uses qualitative methods through a case study approach. I detailed my data gathering techniques, namely library and document research, in-depth interviews, and participant observation. In the second section, I introduced the two case studies that I adopted for the thesis: the conflicts and related peacebuilding efforts in Maluku and Mindanao. Because the mentioned complex conflicts have been at least partially characterised by a deep instrumentalisation of religion, they constitute valuable cases to investigate how religion might be used as a resource for conflict management and peacebuilding. In the next chapter, I directly investigate how Christian and Muslims used religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in Maluku.

CHAPTER 4

The Contribution of Official Religious Institutions to Peacebuilding in Maluku

In Chapter 3, I introduced the dynamics and complexity of the conflict in Maluku. In this chapter, I directly address the research question by examining how religious adherents use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in Maluku through official religious institutions. I use the theory of the ambivalence of the sacred (AoS) to demonstrate how official religious institutions that are involved, to a certain degree, in "religious conflict" in Maluku became key players in peacebuilding. I argue that religion became a force that could be used to oppose conflict-saturated populism, because the leaders of official religious institutions provided strong leadership through the hermeneutics of peace (HoP). They took initiatives to reinterpret the existing understandings of religion and contextualised them to form a new understanding of religion that supported the peacebuilding process in the context of Maluku.

To develop my argument and examine the role of the official religious institutions in peacebuilding, I use two "micro-cases": (1) the Protestant Church in Maluku (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*, GPM)[282] and (2) the Muslim organisations *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), *Muhammadiyah*, and the Indonesian Council of *Ulama* (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, MUI). Taken together, the evidence from these two micro-cases challenges the notion that religion is monolithic or inflexible. I found that the Protestant and Muslim communities[283] in Maluku were extremely dynamic social agents that creatively used a range of religious resources within their respective traditions to contribute to peacebuilding. In the Protestant community, the GPM is an organised and hierarchical local church organisation that has the moral and religious authority to direct and influence Protestants' daily life in Maluku. The GPM began its involvement in peacebuilding through a formal approach by conducting theological reform projects that involved the HoP: these were efforts to reinterpret the sacred texts to develop religious arguments for the Protestant community's engagements in peacebuilding. The Church then used its hierarchical and extensive structures to build formal and

[282] In the context of Maluku, I use the term Christian refers specifically to Protestantism. The Indonesian government recognises the Protestant *(Kristen)* and Catholic *(Katolik)* Churches as "formal religions" or "state-recognised religions" and regards them as separate. The separation between the two is part of the colonial legacy because of "the state of origin" of the two religions (the Portuguese brought *Katolik* and later the Dutch introduced *Kristen* in Indonesia).

[283] In this chapter, I focus on the role of Protestantism and Islam as the two largest religions in Maluku. They played crucial roles in the conflict and peacebuilding. I focus on the role of Protestantism and Islam as the crucial players in the conflict and peacebuilding in Maluku. Both religions are the two largest religions in Maluku. I use the term Christian and Protestant community interchangeably. This does not mean that other religions, especially Catholicism, do not contribute to peacebuilding. Bishop Petrus Mandagi (*Uskup Ambiona*) played key roles in peacebuilding, and the formation of the Maluku Interfaith Foundation and the Concerned Women's Movement, as I explain in the next chapter, was greatly influenced by Catholics.

grassroots commitments to peacebuilding. During this time, progressive and courageous leaders who facilitated the internal transformation of the church led the GPM.

The Muslim community, in which the tradition of having a single authoritative religious organisation is largely absent, became engaged in peacebuilding through other mechanisms. Here, official Muslim institutions (the MUI, the NU, and *Muhammadiyah)* also played a central role in peacebuilding, though through less formal and structural approaches when compared to the GPM. During the conflict, within the fragmented Muslim community, leaders from the MUI, the NU, and *Muhammadiyah* assumed the initiative to develop the HoP. Through the HoP process of re-reading, contextualising, and rejuvenating the Qur'an, the Hadith, the history of Islam, and a platform for moderate Muslim organisations, they identified theological arguments that could be used through official Muslim institutions and networks to convince grassroots Muslims to engage in peacebuilding.

4.1 The Role of the Protestant Church of Maluku (GPM) in Peacebuilding

Whereas Klinken, one of the key analysts of the Maluku conflict, adopted a "politics by other means" approach, arguing that the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*/Indonesia Democratic Party-Struggle (PDI-P)[284] and the GPM were the principal local parties that were responsible for mobilising people to engage in conflict,[285] my research uncovered a rather different reality. The GPM engaged in the HoP to reinterpret and rejuvenate sacred texts to solve dilemmas arising from the conflict and post-conflict situation. This section demonstrates that the GPM, as a local, traditional, and aptly structured religious body, had the spiritual power and authority to redirect its Christian community, even as it was overcome with emotionally charged religious conflict. The GPM could conduct a self-critique and evaluation by questioning its existing theology, which could not offer avenues for preventing the conflict from erupting. The GPM produced a new theology and doctrinal justification to support the Christian involvement in peacebuilding.[286] Therefore, I argue that the GPM constituted a crucial religious resource for peacebuilding within the Christian community in Maluku.

This section includes an investigation into how theological reform occurred in the GPM and how the reform influenced the perspectives of Christians on and their attitudes towards peacebuilding in practice. Additionally, I argue that religious leaders served as a critical resource to

[284] PDI-P is one of the political parties in Indonesia led by Megawati Soekarno Putri. She was President of Indonesia from 2001 to 2004. She is also the daughter of the first Indonesian President, Soekarno.
[285] Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 106.
[286] Of course, using theology to support peacebuilding in Christianity and Islam is not new. As I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, peacebuilding initiatives have occurred in other parts of the world that are deeply driven by religion. What I specifically investigate here is how local religious organisations dynamically produce a new theology in the specific context of Maluku to overcome a bitter social reality that is caused by conflict.

complement the GPM's institutional structures and processes in the pursuit of peacebuilding. Particularly, I investigate the role of Rev. Hendriks, a charismatic theologian who became Chairman of the Synod during a critical time, and who "formally" ended the conflict by signing the Malino II Peace Agreement.

Before I examine the GPM's theological reform and its implications for peacebuilding on the ground, I briefly introduce the manner in which the GPM organised its religious organisation and demonstrate how the structures of the GPM reached Christians even in the remote areas of Maluku.

4.1.1 Introduction to the GPM

Klinken correctly observed that the GPM is 'the largest non-government organisation in the province… All Protestant young people are socialised in the elements of an extremely formal religion through a constant round of activities that takes the dedicated believer away from home most nights of the week.'[287] The GPM has an extensive history of acting as a suitably structured and organised local Protestant church institution after becoming independent from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1935.[288] It has its own hierarchical structure to govern and coordinate its networks, not only in Maluku Province but also in parts of North Maluku Province.

To deliver religious and social services, as well as reach people even in remote villages across Maluku, the GPM organises itself in a three-level leadership structure: *Sinode* (Synod), *Klasis*, and *Jemaat.* The Synod is the central authority of the GPM. The discussion and decisions about renewing the Church's theology, as I discuss below, occurred at this level of leadership. Every five years, the GPM holds the *"Persidangan Sinode GPM"* (the GPM Synod Conference) to elect democratically the Chairman of the Synod and five other executive positions for a five-year tenure.[289]

Below the Synod are the coordinative bodies, called *Klasis.* In 2012, the GPM had twenty-eight *Klasises*, which the Church established on an "as-needed" basis to deliver its social and religious services, and based on the effectiveness of the administrative coordination. In Ambon City, for example, there are two *Klasises*: *Klasis Pulau* and *Klasis Kota*. Because of changes in the

[287] Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratisation in Indonesia: Small Town Wars* (New York: Routledge 2007), 92.

[288] See for example M. Tapilatu, *Sejarah Gereja Maluku (1935-1960)* (Maluku: Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku, 2004); F. Ukur and F.L. Cooley, *Jerih Dan Juang: Laporan Nasional Survey Menyeluruh Gereja Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian dan Studi-DGI, 1979).

[289] Besides electing the leader of Synod, the participants of conference also evaluate the last five years of the Church's vision, mission, programmes, and activities. Based on the evaluation, they plan the Church vision, mission, programmes and activities for the next five years. Additionally, to evaluate the progress report of the Synod' programmes, policies, and activities a smaller conference called *"Persidangan Badan Pekerja Lengkap Sinode* (the Conference of Synod Executive Body) is organised every year. This demonstrates that the GPM is hierarchical. Yet, it is also a "democratic institution": the Synod leaders meet regularly and the representatives of Jemaat and Klasis who attend the conference draft the Synod programmes collectively.

demographical composition of Ambon City and the need to deliver the Church's social and religious services more effectively, the GPM plans to divide two existing *Klasises* in Ambon City into three *Klasises*. In wider Maluku, the GPM has a strategic plan to have 32 *Klasises* in place by 2015.[290]

The lowest level of leadership of the GPM is the *Jemaat*. A cluster of *Jemaats* constitutes a *Klasis*. Generally, one *Jemaat* has at least one church. In numerous cases a *Jemaat* has one large church and two or three smaller churches. The role of a *Jemaat* is critical in the GPM's structure. The real social, political, and religious problems are found at the *Jemaat* level. The *Jemaats* usually forms "units" consisting of Christian families that reside in a *Jemaat* area. The GPM's programmes include a focus at this level of leadership because it directly "meets" with people on the ground.

To spread the GPM's perspective on religion and social life across society, the synod, for example, regularly publishes and distributes small books for *Jemaats* called *Bina Jemaat* (Guidance for *Jemaat*), *Bimbingan Khutbah* (Guidance for Preaching for the GPM pastors), *Santapan Harian Keluarga* (Guidance for Family Daily Activities), *Renungan Pengantar Kerja* (Reflection for Workers/Professions before Working). In 2005, it was reported that the GPM had 524,403 members, consisting of 110,784 families and 754 *Jemaats*.[291]

During my fieldwork, I was able to observe how the GPM structure works. In the GPM churches that I visited, I saw the GPM's theme and sub-theme written on banners that were hanging on the churches' walls. My interviews with the GPM pastors in the local churches show how the GPM's decisions were taken as guidance for daily life by the Church apparatus and the grassroots members. In short, the GPM influenced the daily lives of ordinary Christians in Maluku very strongly. The GPM Synod's decisions are heard and obeyed by the faithful because of its religious and spiritual authority. In some cases, the GPM's authority is substantially stronger than the formal political authority of the government.

Having discussed the GPM's strong structure, which can reach people even in remote areas in Maluku, together with the position of the GPM Synod as the central religious authority, which strongly influences Christian daily life in Maluku, in the next section I investigate the theological reform process that has been occurring for the last 10 years within the GPM. The process of reform is a crucial part of recent GPM history and is central to how the religious institution identified a basis for contributing to peacebuilding.

[290] Interview with Rev. Abraham (Ampi) Hatharie, Ambon, 14 January 2013. He is Coordinator of the Bureau for Publication and Documentation of the GPM Synod.
[291] "Report of the Result of the 35th Conference of the Gpm Synod Held on 25 October -02 November 2005 at Gereja Maranatha (Ambon City)."

4.1.2 The Call for Theological Reform

Theology determines the church's formal position and direction. As a powerful religious organisation, the GPM used its spiritual influence as a religious resource for peacebuilding by engaging in theological reform through the HoP process. The HoP consisted of deep reflection and an extended period of contemplation to answer the fundamental question of why the existing church theology and the practice of religion failed to prevent the eruption and escalation of the conflict.[292] The question of reform could only emerge within the GPM itself because the GPM was not only playing a political game. The GPM, as John Ruhulessin explained, is a religious institution that has multiple social and cultural responsibilities: to Christians and the people of Maluku in general, to government, and to God.[293] Therefore, the self-critique and the evaluation that eventually led to theological reform were necessary for the GPM to remain relevant to the actual challenges that people in Maluku faced.[294]

I.W.J. Hendriks, the former Chairman of the GPM Synod who was responsible for initiating theological reform in the GPM, further illustrated why theological reform took place in GPM:

> When I was elected as the Chairman of Synod [in 2001], I asked a question to myself and colleagues in the Synod. How we—as the Church, the religious organisation, the Kingdom of God—understood the conflict and resolved it. We kept questioning our theological position. We were the church and the way of our thinking must be based on the Church's spirit, it must be based on a theological perspective. [Of course] we learnt [the conflict dynamics] from a social, political, and security perspective. But don't forget, this was the Church, so all of our decisions and policies must be theologically justifiable and accountable.[295]

The internal struggle within the GPM to understand the conflict and its solution theologically manifested in the call for renewal of the Church's theology during the height of the religious conflict. *Sidang XXIV Badan Pekerja Lengkap Sinode GPM* 2002 (the 24th Conference of the Synod Executive Body) highlighted the need for the theological reformation of the GPM to cope with new developments in Maluku, including how the GPM would deal with the escalation and de-escalation of the conflict.[296] In the Conference, the GPM laid down the foundations of the reform of its theology by using the church's sub-theme: "Theological Reform as a Force for Empowerment of the *Umat* (Believers) to Overcome the Multi-dimensional Crisis in Church, Society and State."[297]

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[292] Interview with Rev. John Ruhulessin, Ambon City, 12 July 2011. He is the Chairman of the GPM Synod from 2005 to 2015.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Interview with Rev. Izaac Willem Josias (I.W.J.) Hendriks, Ambon City, 14 January 2013. He was the Chairman of the GPM Synod from 2001–2005.
[296] "The Result of the 24th Conference of the Gpm Synod Executive Body Held on 10-14 November 2002 in Kei Besar ".
[297] "The Result of the 24th Conference of the Gpm Synod Executive Body Held on 10 -14 Nonember 2002 in Kei Besar."

The need for the GPM to reform their theology is demonstrated clearly by its self-evaluation and self-critique leading to the conclusion that "almost all Church apparatuses and adherents slipped into everyday patterns of violence and indifference."[298] Therefore, a position gradually emerged, and was consolidated because "a new theology is needed to ensure that the GPM becomes the Church of Christ, which is prolife, inclusive, incorporative, synergistic, and pro-existence."[299]

The idea of the reformation of theology assumed a concrete formulation in the GPM's visions and missions in 2005. The GPM vision consists of the following:

> As a Reformed Church, the GPM should continue to reform itself by transforming for progressiveness, betterment, perfectness, usefulness, and meaningfulness, and not the other way around, transforming towards regression, degradation and missing of the meaning and orientation of life.[300]

Therefore, the GPM missions are to

> Liberate the Church from a Church worldview that is scripturalist, dichotomist, paternalistic, exclusive, triumphalistic, and imperialistic and to enhance the cultural service based on, for example, contextual, equal, equative, inclusive, pro-existence and dialogical-synergic, humanistic, cooperative, sharing, pro-life oriented principles.[301]

Although the document does not explicitly mention the GPM's vision, mission statements, and attitudes in previous times, we can assume that the GPM wanted to revise their previous position or the inclination of the Church's scripturalist, dichotomist, paternalistic, exclusive, triumphalistic, and imperialistic values and attitudes. By noting that reasons might have existed for the Church to reform itself, some research demonstrates that Christians in Maluku feel superior to others. This problem is called *pangkat serani* (Christian status or rank).[302] In the colonial era, as Cooley records, Christians were granted privileges in the context of colonial rule by virtue of their religion. These privileges included better access to education and jobs, and consequently, numerous Christians felt that they had a higher political and social status than non-Christians.[303] This colonial legacy persisted after the independence of Indonesia until the 1980s through the convention that Christians tended work in formal sectors (e.g., civil servants, banks, and military and police officers) whereas Muslims worked in informal sectors (e.g., trading and services).[304]

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[298] "Report of the Result of the 35th Conference of the Gpm Synod Held on 25 October -02 November 2005 at Gereja Maranatha (Ambon City)," 36.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Ibid., 55.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Cooley, "Altar and Throne in Central Moluccan Societies: A Study of the Relationship between the Institutions of Local Government in a Traditional Society Undergoing Rapid Social Change," 389.
[303] Ibid., 389-90.
[304] Jacob W. Ajawaila, "Orang Kristen Di Maluku Dan Perubahan Sosial Budya," in *A Conference of the GPM in Ambon City*

The GPM mission statement quoted above offered an answer to this reality. Furthermore, two formulations and manifestations of the GPM's HoP directly answer the need to justify working for peaceful conflict resolution: *pro-life spirituality* and *the spirit of pluralism.* Before I discuss in detail pro-life spirituality and the spirit of pluralism in the GPM, noting that theological reform does not necessarily mean that the GPM was involved in speculative debates about, for example, truth and salvation in the hereafter is critical. Rather, the Church's focus was on theologically justifying acting as an institution in the "here and now" to address multiple problems that existed in conflict and post-conflict peacebuilding situations. Additionally, in the GPM's view, theological reform should not only occur in seminaries and formal educational institutions, but the attitudes of the GPM's leaders and members in their daily life should also reflect it. Specifically, 'the term "theology" [is interpreted as all] considerations, decisions and actions that are guided by faith to cope with daily life to enhance the life quality of the people of Maluku.'[305]

(1) Pro-life Spirituality

One of the clear manifestations of the GPM's theological reform, as it relates to the process of peacebuilding, was an emphasis on respect for human lives. The GPM called it '*spiritualitas yang menghidupkan'* or '*spritualitas yang pro hidup'* (the spirituality that promotes life or pro-life spirituality). Pro-life spirituality involves the interpretation and contextualisation of the local situation, but it is also linked to the national situation. The national theme for the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (Persekutuan Gereja-Geraja di Indonesia) (PGI), of which the GPM is a member was 'Seek me and live; seek the Lord and live.'[306]

According to Hendriks, the GPM's decision to choose a pro-life spirituality is based on Jesus Christ's personality, who is taken as an exemplary leader of non-violent resistance for all Christians. Hendriks explained that, during his life, Jesus could have used alternative strategies for his liberation mission, such as joining Zealot groups, which adopted military means to achieve its liberation mission. However, Jesus chose "liberation without violence" by developing the awareness of faith and rightness in his disciples. He chose *Jalan Salib* (the Stations of the Cross) as a way of liberating people. The crucifixion must be viewed as Jesus' nonviolent protest to unjust power, as well as his consistency in using nonviolent means. Jesus sacrificed himself to liberate people from the cycle of violence.[307]

In the context of GPM's theological reform in Maluku, Hendriks stated that he often asked himself and the GPM's pastors and believers these rhetorical questions: 'it is true that Jesus wants

[305]"Report of the Result of the 35th Conference of the Gpm Synod Held on 25 October -02 November 2005 at Gereja Maranatha (Ambon City)," 38.
[306] Amos 5:6-5-6.
[307] Interview with Rev. I.W.J Hendriks, Ambon City, 14 January 2013.

Christians to be involved in this religious war? Does God want the destruction of His own creations?' Hendriks believes that God, as the Creator, does not promote the death and destruction of His creations. Therefore, all GPM members must follow Jesus' ways in their lives, including the pro-life spirituality that was formulated by the GPM in response to the devastating impact of religious conflict in Maluku.[308]

Pro-life spirituality emphasises that life is a valuable gift from God, which should be respected, and for which people should be thankful. During the conflict, human life was not valued. In Rev. Hendriks's expression, "the lives of people are even cheaper than the price of a piece of chicken."[309] In the pro-life spirituality adopted by Hendriks and his GPM colleagues, respecting God means appreciating human life. Searching for God means "ensuring that the accrual of political power, money and knowledge is for the betterment of life and humanity. Therefore, rituals to God cannot be separated from social action for humanity."[310]

Pro-life spirituality emerged between 2002 and 2004 when it became central to the GPM's theological orientation. The GPM's sub-theme in 2002, for example, was "Developing spirituality that promotes life as realisation of theological reform in order to overcome the multi-dimensional crisis in the Church, community, state and nation."[311] With slightly different wording, the GPM's sub-theme in 2003 and 2004 still emphasised the significance of respecting life in the new elaboration of GPM theology. Crucial for the GPM's involvement in peacebuilding is that the term "spirituality" does not only refer to a vertical relation between God and believers but it also emphasises the horizontal connection between people, including with other religious believers. The GPM document in 2002 approached spirituality as a lifestyle that draws on strong faith and heartfelt belief and is expressed as ideas and actions that can be used to answer contextual problems. Therefore, a pro-life spirituality was developed "to prevent things that possibly make humans become inhuman."[312]

(2) Promoting Pluralism and Recognising Local *Adat*

The GPM is renowned as an ecclesiastical institution that historically had strongly opposed the local *adat*. The strong process of "Westernisation" of the church in Maluku, enacted by the Dutch missionaries, proscribed against traditional practices. The Bible, religious instructions, and rituals were translated to the Indo-Malay language, causing Christians to not speak the local Malukan languages. In contrast, these are, still widely spoken by Muslims.

[308] I.W.J. Hendriks, Ambon 14 January 2013.
[309] Interview with Rev. Hendriks, Ambon City, 11 July 2011.
[310] "Report of the Result of the 35th Conference of the Gpm Synod Held on 25 October -02 November 2005 at Gereja Maranatha (Ambon City)." p. 38.
[311] "The Result of the 24th Conference of the Gpm Synod Executive Body Held on 10-14 November 2002 in Kei Besar ".
[312] Ibid., 273.

The process of Westernisation meant that Christians' connections with local practices and customs were broken or disrupted. *Adat* and the ancestral beliefs were often perceived as backwardness, which was to be ignored. *Adat* was to be separated from Christianity so that it would not "contaminate" the purity of Christian teaching.[313] For example, in the recent history of the GPM, the students from Faculty of Theology of the *Universitas Kristen Maluku* (UKIM), which belongs to the GPM, were sent to conduct practical fieldwork *(Kuliah Kerja Nyata*-KKN) in 1980s. They destroyed a holy *adat* site of the local people in Seram Island because they considered the rituals performed at the site to be against Christian teaching.[314]

Within this context, the second manifestation of theological reform in the GPM involves pluralism (*kebhinekaan/kemajemukan*). It includes recognising the importance of local *adat*, such as *pela* and *gandong*, as traditional mechanisms to promote peace and social cohesion. In post-conflict peacebuilding, the GPM realised that, in the past, the Church did not seriously account for the idea of cultural and religious pluralism. This was reflected in the GPM's strategic plan for 1995–2005, which placed little emphasis on the importance of pluralism.[315] As a response, the sub-theme of the GPM from 2005 to 2010 has been pluralism.

The idea of pluralism, in fact, had already emerged in the GPM's discourse in 2002. Eight points were presented in the document entitled *'Pemahaman Iman Gereja tentang Pluralism'* (Church Perspective on Pluralism). Among them is the acceptance of plurality and diversity as historical facts that should be responded to positively and optimistically. Pluralism should be built on responsibility and inclusivity, to learn about each other in order to enrich and celebrate diversity. Furthermore, with the spirit of pluralism, comes a call for the GPM to establish new functional relations between religions in Maluku, which should be implemented concretely, instead of simply through academic and theological debate.[316] Again, the GPM became involved in the HoP, the process of reinterpretation of its basic doctrine, to adjust its position and lay the foundations for contributing to peacebuilding.

Furthermore, in 2006, the GPM's sub-theme was 'Together, implementing the Church's commitment in the context of people of faith in a plural society.'[317] As a religious institution, the GPM realised that cultural and, especially, religious plurality and diversity are a reality that Churches should acknowledge by embracing new perspectives. The GPM, with its goal to promote

[313] Interview with Rev. M. Tapilatu, Ambon City, 16 July 2011. He is senior lecture in *Universitas Kristen Maluku (UKIM)*. He teaches, among other things, the history of the GPM.
[314] Interview with Rev. Hendriks.
[315] "Report of the Result of the 35th Conference of the Gpm Synod Held on 25 October -02 November 2005 at Gereja Maranatha (Ambon City)," 145.
[316] "The Result of the 25th Conference of the Gpm Synod Executive Body Held on 09-15 November 2003 in Buru Selatan," 240-41.
[317] "The Result of the 28th Conference of the Gpm Synod Executive Body Held on 19-22 November 2006 in Masohi ".

pluralism, aimed to develop a common humanity and share responsibility for a new world order at large, and, specifically, a peaceful Maluku, based on justice and non-violence.[318]

To summarize, the theological reform within the GPM, especially regarding pro-life spirituality and the promotion of pluralism and local *adat*, was part of the process of the HoP. The reform laid the foundation for the GPM as a hierarchical religious organisation to contribute to peacebuilding. For an official religious organisation that is highly respected by Protestants in Maluku, theological reform was a critical avenue for using religion for peacebuilding. In the following section, I present the practical application and implementation of the GPM's theological reforms and assess how the reform has directly contributed to the process of peacebuilding in Maluku.

4.1.3 Theology in Action: ANSOS and the Live-in Programme

As I outlined above, the GPM has a powerful structure that reaches people systematically. In this section, I outline two manners in which the GPM systematically mobilised its structure to enact post-conflict peacebuilding in accordance with its theological reforms. The first practical manifestation of the theological reforms within the GPM is the Training in Social Analysis (*Analisa Sosial*) (ANSOS) programme. To implement the Church's vision and mission, which is to answer real problems in the community, including the post-conflict peacebuilding situation, the GPM Synod regularly conducts ANSOS for the GPM's apparatus. This training helps participants to broaden their perspective on social and development theories that could be used as an analytical tool to locate their religious beliefs and church mission in the context of social problems (e.g. poverty, development, environment, and local good governance), including peacebuilding initiatives at the grassroots level. ANSOS is designed to analyse abstract theological perspectives to produce concrete, tangible, and measurable programme activities that address specific problems at the grassroots level.

According to Hengki Pesiwarissa, the head pastor of Silo Church, ANSOS has helped him to link the GPM's theological reforms with social phenomena. Through ANSOS, Pesiwarissa realised that the existence of the Church, for example, is not only for Christians but also for people surrounding the Church, regardless their religious affiliation.[319] Although the Silo Church has not yet established long-term, systematic programmes to reach Muslim communities, the ANSOS training has laid down the foundation for the Church to broaden its perspective and awareness to engage in concrete social actions. The Silo Church, for example, has worked for several years with Muslim communities in Jalan Baru (a Muslim Community behind the Silo church building) to

[318] Ibid., 28.
[319] Interview with Rev. Hengki Pesiwarisa, Ambon City, 20 July 2011. He is the head pastor of Silo Church.

provide dinner for breaking the fast during Ramadhan to show solidarity across religions.[320] In return, the Muslim community in Jalan Baru has organised *gotong-royong* (voluntary work) with the Silo Church congregation members to clean areas surrounding the Church before Christmas.[321]

The second practical activity to implement theological reform at the grassroots level was the Live-in Programme. One of the most serious problems of post-conflict peacebuilding in Maluku was that the people were segregated along religious lines. Whereas both Christians and Muslims now frequent the same government offices, banks, and markets, the segregation barrier is extremely strong and continues to affect social relations deeply. To combat segregation, the GPM, with the assistance from Muslim activists from *Lembaga Antar Iman Maluku* (LAIM), organised the Live-in Programme, which was an activity that had been conducted numerous times for the GPM pastors. After conducting sessions on Islam and Christianity, the participants brainstormed their perceptions and concerns about living or staying with a Muslim family. Subsequently, arrangements were made for every GPM pastor to stay overnight with a Muslim family.

According to the alumni of the Live-in Programme whom I interviewed, as well as the transcriptions of the programme that I could access, the programme changed the participants' perceptions towards their Muslim brothers and sisters. Most of the participants had unpleasant memories of the conflict. Novadyette Mailoa, a woman pastor, said that, if she had a choice, she would have refused to stay overnight with a Muslim family. Her husband and she were the GPM pastors in Poka, where all Christians were expelled from the villages and their church was burnt down during the conflict. Since then, she had found it deeply traumatic to interact with Muslims. She explained that, because the programme was compulsory, she tried to convince herself that her participation in the programme would be a beneficial experience that she could share with her current congregation members. However, because of her personal trauma, she planned to have only extremely limited interaction with the house owner. Even before leaving for her homestay, she had a bath to avoid having a bath in the Muslim house. Because she would arrive at the house in the evening, she planned to have only short conversations, go to sleep, and leave the house early in the morning.[322]

However, Nova had a entirely different experience to that which she expected. The Muslim family that she was to stay with warmly welcomed her. They had a friendly conversation until the middle of the night. They shared the same sadness and worries, as well as hopes that the conflict would not erupt again. She had a bath in the morning and had a chance to work around the neighbourhood and converse with neighbours. One interesting moment and an unforgettable

[320] Ibid.
[321] Interview with Irwan Tahir Manggala, Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He is a Muslim youth leader in Jalan Baru area.
[322] Interview with Rev. Novadyette (Nova) Mailoa, Ambon City, 27 July 2011. She is currently a pastor at UKIM.

memory for her was before leaving the house she met an old Muslim woman who gave her Rp 10,000 (around AUD$1) and asked her to donate the money to the Church and pray for her daughter to recover from a serious illness. She offered this comment:

> The old lady is Muslim. And she donated money to the Church, to a religious institution that does not belong to her religion. The Live-in Programme totally changed my mind toward Muslims. The old Muslim lady also taught me to be a good believer. Sometimes we don't need to have a complicated religious understanding and sophisticated theories on religious pluralism and multiculturalism. Just interact with ordinary believers; you will get wisdom.[323]

Another participant of the Live-in Programme was Lenny who found that the programme played a significant role in her personal life. She also had extremely negative memories of the conflict. Her church was burnt down and all the members of the congregation were evacuated from the village where she worked as a pastor during the conflict. When she was sent to Kebon Cengkeh, a Muslim village in Ambon, to stay overnight with a Muslim family as part of the Live-in Programme, she could not deny that she still had deeply traumatic feelings. She could not imagine that she would sleep in Kebun Cengkeh because it was a stronghold of Muslim combatants and a base camp of Laskar Jihad during the conflict.[324]

Yet, through the Live-in Programme, she experienced a personal transformation. Direct interaction with a Muslim family was part of healing her trauma. She realised that the Muslim family that she stayed with was also a victim of the conflict. Before the programme, she even thought that only Christians suffered from the conflict, and that all Muslims supported the conflict:

> I thought all Muslims are just bad. Why did they kill and expel us from our homes? I thought I would never forgive them. But then I realised that many Muslims disagreed with the conflict, but they just couldn't do anything to oppose and stop it. In fact, they were victims too. Just like us Christians. Not all Muslims are bad.[325]

In addition, the program became a great avenue for her to be more committed to Christian teachings on peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness. After the conflict, she often experienced a "split personality." She should have preached the basic teachings of Jesus Christ on mercy and compassion, but because of her experiences, she preached those values half-heartedly: "sometimes I felt like a hypocrite. I preached in my congregation things that I didn't fully embrace."[326] Therefore, the programmes run by the GPM helped her to heal the wounds and put the church teaching into reality.

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[323] Ibid.
[324] Interview with Rev. Lanny Ambon City, 10 January 2012.
[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid.

The mentioned personal stories show how theological reform within the GPM has influenced the mind and attitudes of the Church apparatus to cope with challenges in the post-conflict context. Whereas the general perception of religion is that it is a force for conflict, the GPM, as a formal religious institution, made a deliberate and substantial effort to find a position to contribute to peacebuilding. The process involves the HoP, which produced theological reform as a foundation to form a new orientation in post-conflict society. Those cases also show how religion, which, to some degree, had previously facilitated conflict, can became a vehicle for social mobilization, as well as for organisational networking, to sustain peace, and legitimise moral righteousness, and justify peace.

In the next sub-section, I discuss the personal history of the chief leader of the GPM to reveal how he used theological reform to act decisively to terminate the conflict and develop sustainable peace. My discussion also demonstrates that religious leadership within the GPM is a critical religious resource in the Protestant community in Maluku. Not only did leaders like Hendriks contribute decisively to theological reform that lay the foundation for concrete and practical peacebuilding; they also exemplified concrete efforts to make peace.

4.1.4 Decisive Religious Leadership

Rev. I.W.J Hendriks is a charismatic and senior theologian who became the Chairman of the GPM approximately two years after the outbreak of the conflict. He was elected as the Chairman of the GPM Synod in 2001 and was part of efforts that ended the conflict by signing a peace agreement in *Perjanjian (Maluku di) Malino* (the Malino II Agreement) in 2002. Hendriks's involvement in peacebuilding efforts is partly embodies the GPM's theological reforms. This leads me to argue that the combination of a highly organised and hierarchical religious organisation, as the premier resource, and passionate personality and leadership, as a secondary important religious resource, made possible the strong engagement of the Protestant community with peacebuilding.

The Synod, as an official religious organisation that has power to direct people's lives, became more powerful and meaningful for peacebuilding when a charismatic personality began to lead it. Hendriks was widely recognised by the Protestant community as a respected senior theologian who has also an exceptional personality, making him the right man, at the right time, in the right place.[327] The deep instrumentalisation of religion during the conflict meant that Christians, including some pastors, could not easily accept peace negotiations as an avenue to terminate the bloody conflict. The GPM, as a religious organisation, was also divided. Lay people and religious leaders fully recognised the importance of the position of the Chairman of the Synod, as the highest

[327] Interview with Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Ambon City, 7 July 2011. He is currently the Chairman of the Department of Research and Development of GPM.

symbol of religious authority in the Church. Therefore, internal competition to control this highest position in the Church hierarchy could not be avoided.

The 2001 Synod Conference exemplifies the ambivalence of religion, where "moderate" and "hard-line" groups within the GPM contested the highest position of the Synod. Both groups realised that the Church's future theological orientation and political policy would be determined by the chairmanship of the Synod. The election of Hendriks as the Chairman in the 2001 Synod Conference symbolised the victory of a "moderate voice" within the GPM over the "hardliners." Another strong contender was Hengky Leleury, who publically promised that, if he were elected as the Chairman of the Synod, he would mobilise all means, including legalising formal institutional supports from the GPM, to fund "Christian soldiers" to defeat the Muslims.[328] Two Chairmen of *Klasis* in Ambon (*Klasis Kota* and *Klasis Pulau*) were part of the hardliners faction within the GPM. Lay people entered into the Conference Hall during the Conference, which, according to the GPM internal law, can only be attended by pastors, to urge the Conference to decide to provide formal support for the Christian warriors in the battlefields.[329] In this extremely tense situation, the election of Hendriks could be viewed as the victory of the religious peacebuilders over the religious peace-spoilers.

In leading the GPM, Hendriks's faith and belief in God, as well as his commitment to the Synod's decisions, especially those on pro-life spirituality, became his resources to lead the church to advocate the ideas of peacebuilding. As the Chairman of the GPM Synod, he became involved in the HoP to define his position in the context of the conflict. He felt a great responsibility to tell Christians "the bitter truth" that the violent conflict must end because it contradicts the basic teachings of the Church. The passage in the Hebrew Scriptures that inspired Hendriks to lead the synod decisively and that was so meaningful to him is worth quoting:

> The word of Lord came to me: "Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning, his blood will be on his own head. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself. But if the watchmen see sword coming and do not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchmen accountable for his blood.[330]

[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ezekiel 33: 1–6. An almost similar allegory can be found in Ezekiel 33: 16–21.

According to Hendriks's understanding and interpretation of these verses, the religious leaders are given a privilege as "watchmen" to see "problems" in a broader, clearer, and longer-term perspective, compared to the lay people's perspective. He adopted the analogy of religious leaders standing up at the top of a fort so they can see "the problems" more clearly than the ordinary people who only stand on the ground. Religious leaders are religiously obliged to remind and warn the people of potential problems. Furthermore, religious leaders are sinful if they do not warn believers of imminent disasters.[331]

When he was elected as the Synod Chairman, he humbly explained his position as follows:

> I'm an ordinary human being who is afraid. But, as a religious leader, I didn't want to compromise the theological principles that were chosen by the Church, with all possible risks that might occur to me and my family. I realised that I was against the mainstream. But I believe in that [theological perspective of pro-life spirituality]. I wouldn't diverge from that theological position.[332]

Through his faith in pro-life spirituality, Hendriks worked tirelessly to end the conflict and restore the relationship between Christians and Muslims. Hendriks used pro-life spirituality as a religious resource that was grounded in the GPM's theological reform as a reason to energise him to work tirelessly for peace in Maluku. He initiated and attended numerous secret meetings and backchannel conversations to build bridges of communication with Muslim leaders to solve problems peacefully. Those meetings evolved into an understanding that the conflict should be terminated by formally signing a peace agreement in Malino (*Perjanjian Maluku di Malino/Malino II*).

In numerous cases, tensions between the church and some members were unavoidable. A few days before the Malino II agreement was to be signed, a bomb exploded behind the Maranatha Church (the GPM Synod office), which signalled the disagreement of some of the grassroots Christians with the Synod's decision to attend Malino II. However, Hendriks called a meeting with pastors and Christian grassroots leaders to convince them that the conflict must be terminated. He asked all Christians in Maluku to practice consistently a pro-life spirituality that should reduce violence and to behave peacefully during the conflict.[333]

The personal process that was involved in the HoP led Hendriks to believe that a pro-life spirituality also implied non-violent resistance. One of the concrete examples of the application of a pro-life spirituality is Hendriks's non-violent action around the middle of 2001. This action was

[331] Interview with Rev. I.W.J. Hendriks, Ambon City, 14 January 2013. He was the Chairman of the GPM Synod from 2001–2005.

[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid.

symbolically critical in showing the Christian and Muslim publics and the local and national governments that the top leader of the GPM had shown his commitment to end the conflict peacefully. After Hendriks had been working for days and nights on building peace constituencies among Muslims and Christians and everyone could see that the conflict was about to end, a horrible tragedy occurred that raised a new tension and wrecked the trust that had just started to develop. A Christian motor boat was bombed, killing dozens of people. Early in the morning after the tragedy, Hendriks had spoken to his colleagues in the Synod that "the war was now his war." Then, wearing his religious attire, he walked to the Governor's office. In front of the Governor's office, below the Indonesian flag, he spread newspapers and sat down on them, closed his eyes and started fasting and meditating. He promised himself that he would not stop fasting and meditating unless government, police, and military officers promised and committed themselves to take serious actions to stop the conflict and enforce the law. In less than one hour, the governor of Maluku came to see him, begging him to stop the action and asked him to discuss the matter in the Governor's office.[334]

The powerful structure of the GPM synod and the consistency of Hendriks' actions in preaching and practicing a pro-life spirituality were fruitful. The GPM, with its considerable influence as a representative body of the Protestant community, and Hendriks's leadership were instrumental in persuading the local and national governments to take crucial measures to end the conflict. Hendriks' attitudes, including his non-violent action in front of the governor's office, also convinced the Muslim leaders and grassroots communities that the top leader of their enemy was extremely serious about stopping the conflict.[335] After a long conversation and negotiation with Muslim leaders and the government, Hendriks led the Christian delegation to sign the Malino II Agreement on 22 February 2002.

The signing of Malino II, as noted by some scholars, did not cause to the immediate cessation of the conflict. Sporadic and provocative incidents still occurred in Maluku until the end of 2002, especially in Ambon City. Convincing the grassroots Christians to obey the points in the Perjanjian Malino while the violence continued constituted a significant challenge. Hendriks and the GPM religious leaders continued campaigning for the idea of a pro-life spirituality as part of the post-conflict peacebuilding process.

In short, one of the concrete manifestations of the GPM's theological reforms partly became evident through Hendriks's personal actions. The election of Hendriks, who was renowned as a charismatic leader who strongly opposed religious conflict, to the highest position in the Church's

[334] Ibid.

[335] Interview with Abdul Wahab Polpoke, Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He is senior Muslim leaders and was formal Co-Chairman of MUI during the conflict.

hierarchy, could be interpreted as the GPM not always acting as the type of political actor that appears in Klinken's analysis.[336] The majority of the voters within the GPM structure elected Hendriks because they believed that Hendriks (with five other elected leaders) would use the GPM's spiritual power to redirect people to end the conflict and build peace. The combination of the power of the official religious organisation (the GPM), through its authoritative religious structure, and Hendriks, who, in his daily life, implemented the theological reforms consistently, were strategic religious resources that were put to use for peacebuilding.

To conclude this section, I summarize some essential findings and arguments that I made thus far. First, the case of the GPM demonstrates, following Appleby's concept of the ambivalence of the sacred, that religion is a phenomenon that can be used to produce positive or negative effects. Whereas the secular perspective approaches religious networks as always having been used to mobilise conflict, the GPM hierarchy provides evidence that it was a critical religious resource in the Protestant community and a significant force in managing peace and security in Maluku. Through a strong and hierarchical religious institution, the GPM can reach and influence hundreds of thousands of grassroots Protestants. More importantly, the GPM holds spiritual power and religious legitimacy for its congregation members, which allows it to direct and redirect the Protestant believers' perceptions and attitudes toward peace and conflict.

In the GPM, the dynamic processes of the HoP were implemented as internal debates that proceeded from rereading the sacred texts together through deep spiritual reflection, contemplation, and socio-cultural and political analysis. The HoP allowed the GPM leadership to ask fundamental questions of whether the Church's theology and its religious practices before and during the religious conflict were in accordance with the fundamental mission of the faith and were relevant to overcome actual problems within society. These were the types of question that allowed the GPM to perform a constructive self-critique and evaluation to identify a new form of theology that could be used as a religious resource for peacebuilding.

Secondly, charismatic, decisive, and passionate leaders who were elected as the GPM's Synod leaders, especially the election of Hendriks as the Chairman of the Synod at the height of the religious conflict, were also critical resources for peacebuilding in the Protestant community. Through the HoP, the process of reinterpretation, and re-contextualisation of the teachings of Jesus, they could facilitate the GPM's change of its stance against populism to redirect the Church's orientation from a strong engagement in communal violence to active participation in peacebuilding. They were religious leaders who wisely used the Church's hierarchy and authority to influence and convince people at the grassroots that the Church must engage in peacebuilding activities. The GPM Synod, with other religious leaders, organisations, and government was able

[336] Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 106.

to sign the Malino II Agreement that ended the religious conflict. They worked tirelessly to implement the agreement by convincing its grassroots network that the agreement was the most appropriate solution for Maluku. The leaders also ensured that the GPM's structure actively participated in peacebuilding. The GPM, for example, organised ANSOS and the Live-in Programme, which helped to break down the new theological understanding into real activities at the grassroots level to deal with complex problems in post-conflict conditions.

Having discussed the role of the official Christian organisations, I now turn to discuss the contribution of the official Muslim organisations in Maluku. As part of the analysis, I examine the different challenges that Christian and Muslim communities faced in using religious resources for pursuing peace in Maluku.

4.2 The Quest for Peace in Muslim Organisations

In this section, I investigate how the Muslim community used religious resources in Maluku to contribute to peacebuilding. Different religious traditions generate different religious resources and approaches to attain peacebuilding. As I discussed in previous section, the primary resource of Christian peacebuilders is the GPM, which is a powerful religious authority that could influence Christian life in Maluku. Islam, in contrast, does not follow the tradition of having a single body of religious authority. For this reason, the religious resources that contribute to peacebuilding in the Muslim community derive less from a highly authoritative and hierarchically structured religious organisation, and more from the religious leaders that constitute and give life to informally and laterally structured organisations.

The people who channelled religious leadership in Muslim organisations in Maluku demonstrated courage by opposing the prevalent public sentiments and emotions, including those expressed by *Laskar Jihad* (the Troops of *Jihad*),[337] the paramilitary group from outside Maluku that wanted to prolong religious wars in Maluku. In a very chaotic situation, the Muslim religious leaders demonstrated decisiveness and commitment to working for peace. They became involved in the HoP, the process of using religious resources (i.e. the Qur'an, the Prophet's Traditions, and the history of Islam) as inspiration and justification to establish a lasting peace in Maluku.

In this section, I begin by assessing the source of religious authority in the Muslim community (*ummah*) of Maluku. Subsequently, I examine the role of the religious leaders of three Muslim organisations, the Indonesia Council of Ulama (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) (MUI),

[337] For further reading, see Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia*, vol. no. 40. (Ithaca, N.Y: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2006).

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), *Muhammadiyah*, and how they *individually* contributed to peacebuilding and used these organisations to contribute *institutionally* to peacebuilding.

4.2.1 Sources of Religious Authority

The common practice in the Islamic Sunni world is that Islam is not based on a hierarchical religious institution that has the authority to supervise Muslim religious affairs. In other words, no body or institution in Islam can become a supreme religious authority that can claim and monopolise the "interpretation of truth."[338] This reality can mean numerous things. One rendering is that Islam is a "leaderless religion" or a "religion without structure." This interpretation, perhaps, confirms the reality that Muslim communities in numerous parts of the world are scattered, divided, disorganised, and suffer from intra- and inter-religious conflict. Another interpretation might be that Islam offers a non-hierarchical framework to its adherents where pluralistic interpretations of religion can flourish and, sometimes, are allowed and appreciated. Everyone's voice should be heard, no one or any Muslim group can claim to be superior to another.

The internal plurality of the *ummah* is also a reality in Maluku. The diversity of Muslims in Maluku, in terms of religious organisations, schools of thoughts, and political affiliations generates a complex situation. Muslims never had a single perspective on conflict situations, leading to different interpretations of the sacred texts to justify the means to engage in conflict or find a solution to it. This has also led to the contention on the question of religious leadership in Muslim communities: Who could represent whom? Which organisation could speak on behalf of Muslims? Whose ideas and interpretations of religions were more "valid" and deserved to be followed by adherents?

In this context, unlike the GPM, which has the moral and spiritual authority to influence the Christian perspectives and attitudes towards conflict and peacebuilding, Muslims face an extremely different institutional landscape, including a far less clear delegation of religious authority. The current Chairman of the MUI, Idrus Tatuhey, for example, describes the different modes of operation of the MUI and the GPM as follows:

> MUI is totally different with GPM. The instruction of the Chairman of the Synod will be directly followed by all the GPM's pastors. In the Muslim community, as you know, we need discussions before we (Muslims) can agree to do something together. Look at real life. The role of the pastor is very important in the Christian community. A funeral cannot be performed in Christianity without the presence of a priest. All rituals in Churches should be led by priests. [In contrast] an elder [without a formal

[338] Eickelman and Piscatori discuss the contested meaning of sacred authority in Muslim Societies. See Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996).

position in Muslim organisation structures] can lead the funeral or ritual in mosques.[339]

One consequence of the less formal structuring of Muslim organisations is that it is institutionally difficult to produce a final and bounded doctrinal perspective and "political" decision on the process of peacebuilding. In these circumstances, the Muslim religious leaders undertook initiatives for peacebuilding *individually* and completed them through and on behalf of Muslim organisations. Thus, the approach is not "institutional" in the same sense that it is within the GPM, and yet, in and through their actions, individual leaders enacted institutional action and leadership in manners that resonate with the actions of Hendriks of the GPM.

Like Christians, Muslims engaged with emotions and sentiments that were caused by a deep instrumentalisation of religious language and symbols in circumstances where the state was absent or compromised. In this highly polarised context, the Muslim leaders conducted the HoP by identifying verses of the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the personal history of Prophet Muhammad that they could use to justify theologically becoming involved in peacebuilding. With a refreshed understanding of Islam, they offered a new stance against populism to open up communication with the enemy and, thus, to end the bloody conflict by finding common ground. They worked assiduously, often at considerable personal risk, to convince the *ummah* that peacebuilding is not only politically appropriate but also theologically justified. Thus, religious leaders used religious resources to contribute to build peace through three Muslim organisations: the MUI, the NU, and *Muhammadiyah*.

4.2.2 Religious Peacebuilders in *Majelis Ulama* Indonesia, Maluku

In this sub-section, I investigate the role of the MUI, as an official religious organisations, and its leaders in peacebuilding and I emphasise my principal argument: strong Muslim religious leadership still channelled and facilitated informally peacebuilding initiatives through institutional structures. Muslim leaders engaged in the HoP, using an interpretation of Qur'an and Hadith to justify peacebuilding and introduced the new interpretation to the Muslim community on behalf of the MUI. To illustrate this case, I specifically discuss the contribution of Ustadz Abdul Wahab Polpoke, the Co-chairman of the MUI, who signed the Malino II Agreement.

From the outside, the MUI, as the Council of Ulamas, can easily be thought to be the most representative Muslim organisation in Maluku. However, this is not the case. Although, historically, the establishment of the MUI was a part of the political strategy of the New Order regime to control the Muslim community and, thus, to expand its political domination, in reality the MUI does not

[339] Interview with Idrus Tukan, Ambon City, 19 July 2011. He is currently the Chairman of the MUI in Maluku.

have power to act as a Muslim umbrella organisation that oversees Muslim religious affairs.[340] In addition, the MUI does not have the grassroots membership base of other Muslim organisations. One effect is that Muslim believers have greater loyalty to the organisation that they are pledged to than to the MUI. Therefore, the MUI decided not to automatically bind the other Islamic organisations from which the Council of Ulamas is drawn. In short, although the government, in some cases, has used the MUI for its political agenda, it does not mean that, by controlling the MUI, it can automatically control Muslim affairs in Indonesia.[341]

Regardless of some of the MUI's weaknesses, this situation arose from the nature of the Islamic community, and simply creating other formal and hierarchical organisations could not help to solve it. Saleh Latukonsina, the Governor of Maluku, with some Muslim leaders, intended to establish a more cohesive and unified Muslim organisation as the alternative to the MUI. After months of preparation, *Musyawarah Besar Ummat Islam Maluku* (the Congress of Muslims in Maluku) was held in Ambon City on 18–21 June 2001. It was claimed that the participants represented all the districts in Maluku and represented all the sectors of the Muslim communities based on age, profession, and gender.[342] The participants agreed to form *Badan Imarat Muslim Maluku* (BIMM) (Executive Body of Muslims in Maluku) and democratically elected a senior Muslim cleric in Maluku, Ustadz Ali-Fauzi, as General Chairman, and Nasir Rahawarin, as General Secretary. The formation of BIMM, however, did not help to solve the problems that they were intended to solve. As I explain further in the next section, a controversy, and even tensions, surrounded the issue of who would represent Muslims at the peace negotiations with Christians. By examining the original document of the Maluku Peace Agreement in Malino, it becomes evident that some leaders signed the agreement on behalf of the BIMM. Yet, after being inactive for several years, the BIMM was finally dissolved by its leadership.[343]

The MUI, in this context, was still regarded as a Muslim umbrella organisation. However, unlike the GPM, as a religious organisation that was formally engaged in the HoP by evaluating existing theology and building a new theology that was compatible with peacebuilding issues, the MUI did not follow formally and directly the GPM's trajectory. The MUI found it impossible to make a formal political and theological decision during the conflict. During my fieldwork, I did not find any formal MUI written documents that showed its theological position in the conflict. Yet, the MUI leaders provided me with numerous stories on how they engaged in the HoP, rereading and re-interpreting the sacred texts to overcome crisis. The initiative to participate in the peacebuilding

[340] See Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Ulama, State, and Politics: Majelis Ulama Indonesia after Soeharto," *Islamic Law and Society* 12, no. 1 (2005).
[341] Ibid.
[342] Interview with Natsir Rahawarin, Ambon City 15 July 2011. He is former Secretary General of BIMM.
[343] Natsir Rahawarin, Ambon 15 July 2011.

process, as I reveal in my forthcoming detailed discussion of the case Ustadz Abdul Wahab Polpoke, originated from individual leaders rather than from institutional policies.[344] A series of secret meetings with Christians, which produced the peace negotiation in Malino, were not formally established as organisational decisions and policy. However, the Muslim leaders later used the MUI to attain greater recognition, support, and justification from the Muslim community.

After the Malino II Agreement, the MUI tried to be more effective as an organisation.[345] The MUI kept working to promote peace in post-conflict Maluku and played at least three roles in post-conflict peacebuilding. First, the MUI has maintained excellent institutional relations with the GPM and the Catholic Bishop of Amboina. They often organised meetings that produced press releases or moral messages to strengthen the peace in Maluku. In critical situations, these religious institutions emerged in public to remind religious people to maintain peace and order.

Second, as a formal religious institution, the MUI continued to support *Lembaga Antar-Iman Maluku* (LAIM, The Maluku Interfaith Foundation). The MUI's support of LAIM has significantly affected the acceptance of the LAIM programme in Muslim communities and organisations. I specifically discuss the role of LAIM in peacebuilding in the section below.[346]

Thirdly, the MUI leaders showed their commitment to the harmonious relations between religion and *adat* as a vehicle for mobilising support for peacebuilding. As elaborated above, an internal plurality existed within the MUI leadership. Some leaders rejected the idea of mixing Islamic teachings with the local culture and *adat* because they might influence the "purity" of Islam. The MUI's General Chairperson, who was the central figure of the organisation, showed his respect to the local *adat*, advocating that it should be enhanced in tandem with religion to establish a suitable peace in Maluku.[347]

The question that remains unanswered is how the MUI leaders decided to participate in peacebuilding projects within the limited formal institutional religious authority that they had. To describe how the MUI leaders used religious resources for peacebuilding, I examine the case of Ustadz Abdul Wahab Polpoke, the co-chairman of the MUI.

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[344] As the Malino II document shows, the thirty signatories of Malino II formally represented Muslim organisations and villages. One represented the MUI, the other six Muslim leaders represented the BIMM. *Muhammadiyah*, *Nahdlatul Ulama* and *Al-Hilal* were respectively represented by one leader.

[345] According to Tukan In 2011, the MUI established its branches in all cities and districts in Maluku, except for Buru Selatan. The government of Maluku continues to support the MUI. Every year, the MUI receives Rp 150 million (around AU$15,000) for its operational costs from the government, including the salary of two administrative staff, a janitor, and two drivers. The government also provided a building for the MUI Maluku at Kapaha, including two cars that are used by the Chairman and General Chairman of the MUI.

[346] Idrus Tukan, Ambon 19 July 2011.

[347] Ibid.

From Warrior to Peacemaker

One of the most influential local Muslim leaders in Maluku was Ustadz[348] Abdul Wahab Polpoke whose personal leadership was seen as equal to that of Rev. Hendriks, the Chairman the GPM Synod. Their names, out of 30 signatories from their respective religions, were the first signatories on the Malino II Agreement. Polpoke's personal history regarding peacebuilding is unique for numerous reasons. First, Polpoke's personal history exemplifies the complexity of religion and the contention and competition over the idea of peace and conflict within the Muslim community in Maluku. Second, it demonstrates the ambivalence of the sacred, where religion has power to motivate its adherent to be either warlords or peacemakers. It also shows the power of the HoP: religious interpretation can be used to mobilise for peace.

Third, it confirms my argument that in the Muslim community, in the context of the absence of a religious institutional authority, serious peacebuilding initiatives relied on individual leadership to leverage wider institutional legitimacy. Without the organisational support, the Muslim leaders tried to convince the *ummah* of the importance of peace in accordance with the "new" interpretation of the Qur'an and the Hadith. Later, to provide a stronger justification, those personal efforts to build peace were incorporated as part of an organisational decision.

Polpoke is not, to borrow Race's term, an inclusivist and pluralist peace activist.[349] When I interviewed him, Polpoke still seemed to me to be a "conservative" religious leader. He opposed the idea of the revitalisation of *adat* (*pela-gandong)* that has been widely promoted by most peace activists in Maluku. For him, *pela-gandong* was part of the Dutch strategy to weaken the position of Islam. *Pela-gandong,* according to Polpoke, also failed to prevent violent conflict from erupting and, therefore, he saw no reason for revitalising it to sustain peace in Maluku. He also criticised Muslim leaders in the Ambon government who open and close their speeches by greeting their audience with *shalom*[350] instead of *assalamu'alaikum*, which is recommended by Islam. Nonetheless, although he is not an inclusivist and a pluralist according to "Western standards," the story of Polpoke shows that, even for an "exclusivist" religious person, religion still provides opportunities to mobilise for peace.

A month before the conflict erupted in Ambon City, Polpoke claimed that he was informed by "someone" that Christians would attack Muslims. He carried a *parang* (sword) everywhere he went. Even during his speeches in *tarweh* prayer in Ramadhan,[351] he urged Muslims to equip themselves

[348] *Ustadz* is an Arabic term that means teacher. In Indonesia, the term *ustadz* is commonly referred to religious or Islamic teachers.

[349] Alan Race, *Christian and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Orbis Books, 1982), 10-37.

[350] Part of indication of the rise of religious symbolism in Maluku is that Malukan Christians greet others using *shalom* in their formal speeches, which cannot be found among any Christian communities in Indonesia.

[351] The conflict in Maluku erupted on 19 January 1999, during *'IdulFitri*, the largest Muslim festival in Indonesia, which marks the end of Ramadhan, the month of fasting.

and their families with an "arsenal" to defend themselves from Christian attack. Because of this, people labelled him a crazy *ustadz* who preached violence.[352]

During the conflict, Polpoke was one of the Muslim leaders to whom the communities listened. With other leaders, he became involved in setting up a strategy to defend and save Muslims communities from being attacked by Christians. Numerous informants told me the widely renowned story that in a speech that was given to thousands of people during a *mujahidin's* funeral in a Muslim graveyard in Waihaong, he swore that he would cut off his own finger if he were unsuccessful at kicking Christians out of Ambon City.[353]

However, a certain understanding and interpretation of the Maluku conflict dynamics allowed him to soften his political and religious position toward the "enemy" (Christians). This case demonstrates that change and dynamism within religion through the HoP are possible. Polpoke became involved in the process of the HoP when he was trying to interpret and rejuvenate the meaning of some of the verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith, as the principal source of theological justification, in accordance with the new developments and dynamics within the conflict.

When I interviewed him, Polpoke revealed the reasons and means for changing his position from "warrior" to "peacemaker" as he came to terms with a shift in conflict dynamics that he analysed through an Islamic theological perspective. First, Polpoke believed that Islam teaches its followers to take seriously the "Islamic ethics of war." In Islam, for example, war can only be declared as a self-defence mechanism to protect Islam and Muslim communities from the enemy. In other words, Islam prohibits its adherents from initiating offensive wars. Polpoke observed that, at the time when he was assuming initiatives to identify solutions to Maluku's problems, Christians were no longer attacking Muslim communities, or at least the intensity of the wars that Christians initiated had greatly reduced. Therefore, Muslims had a reason, grounded in Islamic ethics, to organise dialogue to find avenues to terminate the violence.[354]

Second, and more specifically, the HoP played a critical role in developing the Islamic ethics of war. According to Polpoke, Islam prohibits Muslims from "exceeding the limit." Numerous verses in the Qur'an, in various contexts—not only in war situations—oblige Muslims to view matters proportionally and not to transgress.[355] According to Polpoke, when he was involved in dialogue with Christians, Muslims were at the point of winning the war. Because of the Christians' weak position, Christian leaders sent a "signal" that they wanted to stop the war:

[352] Interview with Abdul Wahab Polpoke, Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He was co-Chairman of the MUI in Maluku during the conflict.
[353] Conversation with numerous friends and respondents in Ambon.
[354] Interview with Polpoke
[355] See, for example, the Qur'an, Al-Baqarah: 190 "And fight in the way of Allah the ones who fight you, but do not transgress; surely Allah does not love the transgressors."

> In wars, there is no an Islamic teaching that obliges us (Muslims) to vanquish the enemy (Christians). We cannot even kill an enemy who has surrendered. And there is not a verse in the Qur'an or the Hadith that instructs Muslims to continuously fight the war against the enemy (without conditions).[356]

Thirdly, according to Islam, Muslims should forgive their enemies if they surrender. Forgiveness is one of the basic teachings of Islam.[357] As suggested by Abu-Nimer, forgiveness is one of the profound principles of Islamic peacebuilding.[358] However, Muslims often forget the concept of forgiveness during conflict, perhaps, because of self-interest, which stimulates anger, hated, retaliation, and prejudice. During my interview, Polpoke quoted the Qur'an:

> Quite a number of the People of the Book wish they could turn you (people) back to infidelity after you have believed, from selfish envy, after the Truth has become manifest unto them; but *forgive* and overlook, till Allah accomplish His purpose; for Allah has power over all things.[359]

Numerous verses in the Qur'an, according to Polpoke, persuade Muslims to forgive even their harshest enemies, if they want to make peace. However, because of emotions and limited knowledge, some Muslims, especially those who rejected the idea of peace, only observed a particular verse or verses in the Qur'an without interpreting it or them within the more comprehensive spirit of the Qur'an. For example, Polpoke noted that verses such as "Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with thee unless thou follow their form of religion" (*Albaqarah*: 120) was extremely popular. It was used by some Muslims to oppose the process of peaceful resolution without knowing the specific context of the verse's revelation and whether the verse was relevant to the Maluku situation.[360]

Polpoke also argued that to resolve Maluku's problems, people must focus on its problems and not introduce outsiders' problems, which could worsen the difficulties already faced in Maluku. He pointed to the manner in which the religious conflict in Maluku became more difficult because Muslim fighters were associated with the Palestinians and the Christians with the Jews. Therefore, in a Muslim public gathering, Polpoke said this to his audience:

> If Christians do not want to solve the problems peacefully, let them go to the Middle East to help Israel to attack Palestinians. [Or, the other way around], if Muslims do not want to allow the peace process to materialise, they should go to Middle East to help Arafat [the Palestinians] to fight against Jews. Ambon is not a place for (religious) fighting![361]

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[356] Interview with Polpoke.
[357] Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice*, 67.
[358] "A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam," 232.
[359] Al-Qur'an, Chapter Al-Baqarah; verse 109.
[360] Interview with Polpoke.
[361] Abdul Wahab Polpoke, Ambon 15 July 2011.

With these and similar political and theological motivations, Polpoke became involved in a conversation to search for the possibility of a solution to the conflict. Several meetings were organised voluntarily by religious organisations or were facilitated by the government. Notably, no one explicitly and publically used and promoted the words "peace" or "peaceful resolution" *(perdamaian or penyelesaain konflik secara damai).* Any efforts to discuss peace would be rejected by the masses. Therefore, the religious leaders needed to paraphrase the term "peace and peaceful conflict resolution" to "*menyelesaikan sengketa*" (to resolve a dispute) *or mengakhiri kekerasan/masalah"* (to terminate violence or resolve a problem).

Assuming a position to promote dialogue was not without risk. For example, in a public consultation before the Malino II Agreement, in a mosque in Kapaha, Polpoke explained the importance of the "termination of the conflict" with Christians. A young man stood up and spoke in front of the gathering, discouraging him from promoting a peaceful resolution with Christians. If Polpoke did not adopt this position, the young man claimed that Polpoke's blood would be *halal*—allowed to be spilt. The young man thought that killing Polpoke was justified because he persuaded Muslims to compromise with the enemy, which Islam did not allow. The crowd started to scream. Luckily, some elders could control the situation from becoming more chaotic. This type of terror occurred several times.[362]

The risks that Polpoke and other participants of the Malino II Agreement faced increased after they returned from Malino.[363] When returning home from the Al-Fatah Mosque, Polpoke's car was stopped by hundreds of people who opposed the Malino II Agreement. They threw stones at his car, breaking all its windows. The crowd, who were carrying swords, tried to approach him. Fortunately, police officers guarded him from the angry crowd.[364] Polpoke affirmed that he was able to overcome his terror because of his belief in God. He believed that his interpretations of the Qur'an and the Hadith that drove him to become involved in the process of peacebuilding were correct and, therefore, blessed by Allah. He believed that Allah protected him because he did what Allah instructed him to do.[365]

Polpoke used his personal interpretation of religion to justify the process of peacebuilding through the MUI, of which he was co-chairman, and to support his commitment in the face of real and significant personal risk. As noted above, although the MUI was not highly organised and functional in Maluku during the conflict, its peacebuilding missions gained considerable legitimacy and recognition in the eyes of Muslims, Christians, and the both national and provincial government

[362] Ibid.
[363] Tamrin Ely, a member of the Maluku local parliament, who is also Chairman of the Muslim delegation to Malino, found his house burnt by Muslims as an act of terror because of his attendance at the Malino II Agreement. Interview with Tamrin Ely, Ambon City, 5 August 2011.
[364] Polpoke.
[365] Interview with Ustadz Polpoke

because it was a religious organisation. As noted above, Polpoke, who signed the Malino II Agreement on behalf of the MUI, recognised that his peacebuilding mission attained greater effectiveness in reaching the larger Muslim communities when he worked through organisations.[366] The MUI, according to Polpoke, helped to build a perception among Muslim communities that mainstream *ulamas* in Maluku were pro-peace agreement and Muslims in Maluku must follow the *ulamas*' decision.[367]

To sum up, in the Muslim community, charismatic and courageous religious leaders, such as Polpoke, used their long historical engagement with the Muslim community before and during the conflict, and their knowledge of Islam, to convince the *ummah* that a peaceful resolution was the best choice for them. Polpoke engaged in the HoP, finding justification from the Qur'an and the Hadith to cease the conflict. Yet, Polpoke signed the Malino II Agreement on behalf of the MUI. This indicated that support from official religious institutions was substantial and that the interplay between Muslim leaders and organisations was critical. Furthermore, in post-conflict peacebuilding, the MUI played peacebuilding roles, such as maintaining good relations and communication with other official religious organisations (e.g., the GPM). The MUI, together with other official religious organisations, also established and continued to support the LAIM (Maluku Interfaith Foundation). The MUI's commitment to support the revitalization of local customs *(pela-gandong)* was also crucial to building peace in Maluku. Below, I turn to investigate the contribution to peacebuilding in Maluku by the NU and *Muhammadiyah*, and of their leaders as provincial representatives of the two largest Muslim organisations in Indonesia, which have contributed substantially to Indonesian development in general.

4.2.3 Muslim Peacebuiders in *Nahdlatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah*

Extensive research has been conducted on Islam in Indonesia, which is the most populous Muslim country in the world, and especially on the NU[368] and *Muhammadiyah*,[369] the two largest Muslim organisations in Indonesia. Both the NU and *Muhammadiyah*[370] were established long before Indonesia gained independence in 1945. They played critical roles at every juncture of Indonesian

[366] Ibid.
[367] Ibid.
[368] See for example Greg Fealy and Greg Barton, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia*, vol. no. 39. (Clayton, Vic: Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, 1996); Robin Bush, "Islam and Civil Society in Indonesia: The Case of the Nahdlatul Ulama" (2003). A. Farichin Chumaidy, "The Jam'iyyah Nahdlatul 'Ulama : Its Rise and Early Development, 1926-1945" (M.A., McGill University (Canada), 1976).
[369] See for example Suwardi, "Muhammadiyah, Reformer of Islam in Indonesia," *INDONESIAN QUARTERLY* 14, no. 1 (1986). Achmad Jainuri, "The Formation of the Muhammadiyah's Ideology, 1912-1942" (Ph.D., McGill University (Canada), 1997). Muhammad Fuad, "Islam, Modernity and Muhammadiyah's Educational Programme," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (2006).
[370] *Muhammadiyah* was established in 1912. The NU was established 14 years later, in 1926.

history. A strong network, which was established through their branches, and concrete social programmes at the community level throughout Indonesia make *Muhammadiyah* and the NU extremely influential in Indonesia, both socio-culturally and politically.[371]

No systematic local study about the *Muhammadiyah* and the NU in the context of Maluku is available. My fieldwork findings in Maluku coincided with Klinken's conclusion that the NU and *Muhammadiyah* are weaker compared to their counterparts in other parts of Indonesia.[372] However, NU and *Muhammadiyah* in Maluku are still religiously and politically credible because they are part of strong and influential religious organisations in Indonesia, which is the largest Muslim country in the world. Moreover, the moderate Muslim organisations of NU and *Muhammadiyah*, which were strongly established in Indonesia, also used their platform in Maluku to help to resolve the conflict.

In the context of peacebuilding in Maluku, the Chairman of the NU, Jakuba Karepesina,[373] was one of the signatories of the Malino II Agreement. I was unable to identify any specific documents that outlined the NU's theological position on peacebuilding, just as I was unable to identify such a document for the MUI. According to Syarief Hidayat, the secretary of NU in Maluku, no systematic and intensive discussion occurred within the NU to answer fundamental questions, either concerning the reasons why the NU should attend the Malino peace talks or the nature of the NU's theological position on the resolution of the conflict.[374] This occurred because the conflict impeded the NU's structure from working adequately. More importantly, the internal plurality of the NU prevented the NU from forming a consensus among its leaders on how it should have acted during the conflict and how the conflict should have ended. Some NU senior leaders, such as Mohammad Attamimi, strongly opposed the Malino peace talks.[375] Conversely, Karepesina decided to attend the peace talks in Malino, with all of the possible risks that he would encounter from the *ummah*, including facing the NU members who rejected the idea of the Malino peace talks.

Hidayat explained that Karepesina had two reasons for attending the Malino peace talks. The reasons consisted of a combination of the NU's perspectives on Islam and "political realism." First, the Indonesian public already knows the NU as a "moderate" Muslim organisation that offers a peaceful approach to undertaking *dakwah* (proselytising) and rejects any forms of radical, violent, and extremist activism. The NU is also extremely friendly towards local traditions and practices, which led to the NU being dubbed a traditional Muslim organisation. The NU, therefore, strongly supports the traditional belief and practice that all people of Maluku are *orang basodara* (siblings), regardless of their religious affiliation, because they are tied by *pela* and *gandong*. These are the

[371] Fealy and Barton, *op. cit*.; Bush, *op. cit*.; Chumaidy, *op. cit*.; Suwardi, *op. cit*.; Jainuri, *op. cit*.; Fuad, *op. cit*.
[372] Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 92.
[373] I could not meet Jakuba Karepisina because he was seriously ill.
[374] Interview with Syarif Hidayat. Ambon City 27 July 2011. He is Secretary of NU in Maluku
[375] Interview with Mohammad Attamimi, Ambon City 28 July 2011. He is currently Head of the Department of Religious Affairs in Maluku.

NU's general principles that were used by Karepeinsa as a principle, which all the NU members must support, for the termination of conflict between *orang basodara*. The NU members should also be involved in the process of reconciliation in this "family dispute."[376]

Second, regarding politics, an immediate termination of the religious conflict was the only available choice if Malukans did not want to face a worst-case scenario. At the same time, the local and national governments had also shown their strong commitment to end the conflict. With these two perspectives, Karepesina decided to become involved in the peace process, attending the Malino peace talks.[377]

The participation of Karepesina, as one of the signatories of the Malino II Agreement, was highly appreciated because his presence boosted the political and social legitimacy of the agreement.[378] Although the NU in Maluku was weak, within the context of both national and local political landscapes, the presence of an NU representative at the Malino peace talks increased the political and moral credibility of choosing peace because the Maluku branch of the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia supported it. In this case, the NU, as a religious organisation, played a role in peacebuilding in Maluku. The association of the NU in Maluku with the national Muslim organisation has helped to increase its credibility as the voice of Muslims in Maluku.

Additionally, the involvement of the NU in the post-conflict reconstruction was incorporated by its autonomous body, the Institute for Research and Human Resource Development of the NU (*Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia NU*) (LAKPESDAM NU). Currently, LAKPESDAM is actively involved in peacebuilding activities as a part of a consortium of non-governmental organisations called *Titian Perdamaian*, which focuses on the revitalisation of local culture to support the peace and reconciliation process in Maluku.[379]

I argue that, although the NU is weak in Maluku, it played crucial organisational roles in mobilising support for peace. The NU leaders command a degree of social and political recognition not only from Muslims but also from Christians and the local government because they are part of a powerful Muslim national organisation. Additionally, the teaching of the NU as a moderate Muslim association also encouraged the NU local leaders to participate in resolving conflict peacefully.

I turn to discuss *Muhammadiyah*, a Muslim organisation that is renowned for its network of social services, such as schools, universities, hospitals, and orphanages.[380] Like NU,

[376] Interview with Syarif Hidayat, Ambon City, 27 July 2011. He is Secretary General of NU in Maluku.
[377] Ibid.
[378] Hasbollah Toisuta, "Damai, Damai Di Maluku!," in *Revitalisasi Karifan Lokal: Studi Resolusi Konflik Di Kalimantan Barat, Maluku Dan Poso*, ed. Alpha Amirrachman (Jakarta: ICIP, 2007), 157.
[379] For more detail see Wisodo, *Bertaruh Nyawa: Kisah Gerakan Peringatan Dini Di Ambon*.
[380] According to data that I could access, in 2010, *Muhammadiyah* claimed to have 25 million members and established branches across Indonesia, which have 16,860 schools (from nurseries and kindergartens to high school),

Muhammadiyah in Maluku is weaker compared to other *Muhammadiyah* branches in Java and Sumatra.[381] Although some of *Muhammadiyah*'s social services are present in Maluku, they are considerably fewer compared to other *Muhammadiyah* provincial branches.[382]

One of the more noticeable attempts of *Muhammadiyah*'s involvement in peacebuilding was the initiative of the Department of *Muhammadiyah* Elementary-Secondary Education of Ambon City *(Majelis DIKDASMEN Muhammadiyah Kota Ambon)* to establish *Sekolah Rekonsiliasi* (Reconciliation School). In 1999, *Sekolah Menengah Umum Muhammadiyah Ambon* (SMUM Ambon) (Muhammadiyah High School of Ambon) was burnt down during the conflict. With extremely limited facilities and resources, SMUM Ambon continued to run the school by sharing space in Sekolah Dasar Negeri (elementary state school) Tawiri and Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri II Ambon (secondary state high school) Ambon. The principal objective of the *Sekolah Rekonsiliasi* was to provide an educational space where Christian and Muslim teachers and students could interact and mingle as a real example of the idea of reconciliation. Having rebuilt the SMUM Ambon with the support of the UNDP, the *Sekolah Rekonsiliasi* was formally opened on 5 February 2004. The school promoted reconciliation through classes where Muslim and Christian students studied in the same classes with teachers from different religious backgrounds. Given that, during the conflict, schools, teachers, and students were segregated along religious lines, the initiative of the SMUM Ambon represented the first effort to break down the segregation barriers in education.[383] A few months later, violent conflict broke out again in Ambon City. On 24 April 2004, the *Sekolah Rekonsiliasi* was burnt down amid mass violence.

In addition to *Sekolah Rekonsiliasi*, Idrus Tatuhey, the Chairman of *Muhammadiyah*, became actively involved in the process of peacebuilding. Tatuhey recalled that he was involved in the early stages of preparation of the Malino II Agreement. Even long before the Malino peace talks initiative had emerged, he was already engaged with a local peace initiative called *Pusat Rujuk Sosial* (Centre for Social Reconciliation) where some inter-religious leaders and academics established strategies to terminate the bloody conflict.[384]

It was difficult to decide for *Muhammadiyah* whether it should become involved in the Malino peace talks because some *Muhammadiyah* leaders and members, in principle, opposed the idea of "peace" and "reconciliation" with the enemy. In other words, *Muhammadiyah*, as an

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186 tertiary education institutions (universities and technical collages), 284 health service units (hospitals and clinics), 509 orphanages, 868 microcredit/finance institutions, and 11,959 mosques and *mushalla* (small mosques).

[381] Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 92.

[382] Interview with Idrus Tatuhey, Ambon City 18 July 2011. He is former Chairman of Muhammadiyah in Maluku and of the signatory of Malino II Agreement.

[383] Ivan Hadar, "Terobosan Pasca-Konflik: Aliansi Perdamaian." Can be accessed on http://www.unisosdem.org/article_detail.php?aid=3112&coid=1&caid=53&gid=1).

[384] Interview with Tatuhey.

organisation, could not formally agree on a stance about the conflict and conflict resolution. As was also the case for the NU, no formal meetings were organised involving *Muhammadiyah*'s Maluku provincial leadership because the *Muhammadiyah* leaders were scattered in refugee camps or stayed with their relatives outside Ambon City. Only two or three leaders could meet occasionally in *Muhammadiyah*'s offices. During the conflict landline and mobile phone connections were highly unreliable, making communication difficult.[385] In that challenging context, Tatuhey believed that, as the Chairman of *Muhammadiyah*, he had to attend and participate in the Malino II meetings to stop the conflict because he saw that the conflict had destroyed the future of people of Maluku.[386]

As with the case of the NU, I could not find any documents that would explain *Muhammadiyah*'s theological position on peacebuilding. However, according to Tatuhey, as a Muslim leader, his decision to attend the Malino talks was sturdily grounded in *Muhammadiyah*'s religiosity. Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of *Muhammadiyah*, was a controversial figure during his time because of his progressive thought and actions, which the majority of people did not understand when he started his reform activism. People later recognised that Dahlan's actions were theologically and socially correct because they saw their positive implications. Tatuhey knew that his decision "to shake hands" with the enemy would be perceived by the *ummah* as madness by religious leaders. However, Tatuhey strongly believed in the principle that "a leader is to lead," despite realising that coming to Malino would negatively affect him and his family.[387]

Tatuhey explained, moreover, that his decision was theologically justified in Islam. He was convinced that the Prophet Muhammad's life story provides an excellent example of how the Muslim *ummah* could resolve political disputes and conflict through peace negotiations. The Prophet Muhammad personally negotiated numerous peace treaties with Christians and Jews to find common ground for peaceful coexistence.[388]

After signing the Malino II Agreement and returning to Ambon, Tatuhey experienced numerous acts of terror and intimidation from Muslims who disagreed with the agreement. Again, Tatuhey considered that the Prophet consistently upheld the peace treaties that he had reached and promised to punish any Muslims who broke the agreements. With this understanding, Tatuhey continued to persuade Muslims to accept the Malino II Agreement as a starting point to begin a new chapter in Maluku's history. His commitment to uphold the Malino II Agreement was also strengthened by the fact that the Vice-Chairman of *Muhammadiyah*'s Central Board, Din

[385] Idrus Tatuhey, Ambon 18 July 2011.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Ibid.
[388] Ibid

Syamsuddin, also attended the Malino II Agreement signing and advised him to consistently support it.[389]

I argue that, as in the case of the NU, *Muhammadiyah* is not a strong Muslim organisation in Maluku. However, being part of an influential national religious organisation, *Muhammadiyah* in Maluku has social and political leverage as a religious organisation to contribute to peacebuilding in Maluku. Moreover, *Muhammadiyah*'s leader in Maluku also used the teaching of the founder of *Muhammadiyah* as an inspiration to participate in the process of peacebuilding, which diverged from populism.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the official Protestant and Muslim organisations exercised different, rich, and pluralistic religious resources in peacebuilding. The Protestant organisation (the GPM) used a formal religious approach to peacebuilding by using its powerful and hierarchically-structured religious organisation, which had the power to determine the direction and orientation of the Protestant believers in Maluku, as the primary religious resource for peacebuilding. The GPM explored the HoP as part of theological reform in an exegetical process of re-reading doctrinal texts and contextualising them to facilitate the flourishing of peace. The GPM also organised practical programmes, such as the Live-in Programme and Social-Analysis Training (ANSOS), which helped to analyse the theological reform to produce practical and implementable programmes for building peace at the grassroots level.

The Synod leaders who were elected during the height of the religious war were also part of the religious resources in the Protestant community. Conducting and institutionalising the GPM's theological reforms was possible because of the decisive and charismatic leadership that emerged during the conflict. In other words, personal leadership complemented the role of the GPM as the principal religious resource that contributed to peacebuilding in the Christian community.

In contrast to the GPM, the absence of a single hierarchical religious authority in the Muslim community led Muslims to pursue peacebuilding using a different approach. Whereas the GPM adopted a formal institutional approach to peacebuilding, Muslims worked toward peace in an informal manner. The role of individual Muslims, specifically leaders, in this context, was central. The Muslim leaders led through informal initiatives to engage in the HoP, discovering theological justifications for peacebuilding and introducing new theological understandings to official Muslim organisations to attain greater and larger levels of support from Muslim communities.

[389] In the Malino II Agreement, Din Syamduddin signed as a witness on behalf of the secretary-general of the MUI.

The three top leaders of the Muslim organisations (the MUI, NU, and *Muhammadiyah*) also used different religious resources in their attempts to contribute to peacebuilding. Whereas Polpoke (Co-chairman of the MUI) explicitly used the Qur'an and the Hadith to establish an Islamic ethic of war that justified his initiatives to build peace, Karepesena (Chairman of NU) and Tatuhey (Chairman of *Muhammadiyah*) did not directly use the Qur'an and the Hadith. Karepesena used the NU's platform as a moderate Muslim organisation that opposed all forms of religious violence and extremism and supported peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims based on local custom and wisdom (*pela-gandong*). Tatuhey used the life history of the founder of *Muhammadiyah*, Ahmad Dahlan, who modelled strong, consistent, and decisive leadership even when making decisions that ran against the mainstream. Tatuhey also believed that his decision to become involved in making peace deals with Christians had its precedents in Islamic history, such as the peace treaties that the Prophet Muhammad himself implemented.

Muslims organisations also contributed to peacebuilding practically. They organised practical programmes, such as the School of Reconciliation, strengthening the relationships of religion and local *adat*, and promoting inter-communal harmony through interfaith institutions. Within limitations, the Muslim organisations still had a relatively high level of social-cultural recognition from the people because of the long period in which they had been present in Maluku, which preceded the conflict considerably. More importantly, those organisations are part of large national Muslim organisations that gave them a level of legitimacy as representatives of the Muslims in Maluku in the eyes of the Muslim community, the Protestant leaders, and the government.

Both of the micro-cases concerning the Christian and Muslim official religious institutions demonstrate that ignoring the contribution of religion to peacebuilding in Maluku is a mistake. In fact, official religious organisations that previously engaged in "religious war" through the HoP turned to offer pluralistic, flexible, and rich resources for peacebuilding.

CHAPTER 5

Searching for Peace through Unofficial Religious Institutions

Having examined the role of official religious institutions in peacebuilding in the previous chapter, in this chapter I investigate the role of "unofficial" religious organisations in Maluku. I use the term "unofficial" to refer to religious groups or communities that are part of an official religious organisation in terms of their theology, but whose operations are akin to those of non-government organisations (NGOs) and which do not have structural links to official religious organisations.[390] What, in turn, makes them different to "secular NGOs" and other types of peacebuilding initiatives is that their formation, programmes, and activities are used as religious resources. The unofficial religious institutions engage in the hermeneutics of peace (HoP), the process of re-reading sacred texts, religious traditions, and narratives to identify religious arguments that can justify their involvement in the peacebuilding process. Therefore, their peacebuilding missions are deeply motivated and grounded in religious worldviews. The principal argument of this chapter is that religion significantly contributes to peacebuilding in Maluku in *pluralistic* manners. That is, I argue that religion makes a far greater contribution to peacebuilding than numerous commentators allow, and in manners that are far more flexible, dynamic, and diverse than is usually supposed. Specifically, unofficial religious institutions show flexibility and fluidity by using others resources, such as local beliefs and traditions (*adat)*, as well as secular norms and perspectives to build a sustainable peace.

To develop my argument, I present three micro-cases: (1) the Maluku Interfaith Foundation (*Lembaga Antar-Iman Maluku*) (LAIM); (2) the Concerned Women's Movement (*Gerakan Perempuan Peduli*) (GPP); (3) and peacemaking efforts in two villages: Seith and Wayame. The three micro-cases demonstrate that, firstly, religion can contribute to peacebuilding through interfaith organisations (e.g., LAIM) that can adopt approaches and strategies that are commonly practiced by secular NGO's in organising their peacebuilding programmes. Secondly, religion in Maluku contributes to peacebuilding through the women's movement (the GPP), which used a feminist perspective to reinterpret and rejuvenate sacred texts so that they can be utilised as resources for peacebuilding. Thirdly, religion played a critical role in keeping the villages of Seith and Wayame peaceful during the religious conflict in Maluku. Religious people in the two peaceful

[390] As I explain in more detail later in this chapter, the Maluku Interfaith Foundation (*Lembaga Antar Iman Maluku*) (*LAIM),* was formally established by three official religious organisations in Maluku: the MUI (Islam), the GPM (Protestant) and the Catholic Diocese of Amboina). However, in organising their programmes and activities, the executive body of LAIM acts very independently from those official religious institutions. I found that LAIM operates like an NGO and that, therefore, it falls into the category of unofficial religious institution.

villages worked together using two different resources: *adat* in Seith and "secular values" in Wayame.

5.1 Waging Peace through Interfaith Dialogue: Maluku Interfaith Foundation

In this section, I investigate the manner in which religious resources operate through Maluku Interfaith Foundation (*Lembaga Antar-Iman Maluku-LAIM*), an interfaith institution. Religions in Maluku developed an inter-religious theology that allowed people from different religious backgrounds to work together to solve the common problems that arose because of the conflict. The LAIM bases its theology on the assumption that religion is inclusive, rather than exclusive, of other faiths. Moreover, the example of LAIM shows that religion can be extremely flexible, particularly in adopting the techniques and methods of social transformation that secular NGOs commonly practice. Although, historically, three official religious organisations supported the formation of LAIM, as I discuss below, LAIM operates like an independent institution on a daily basis, where the executive body of LAIM has the authority to establish, organise, and evaluate programmes and activities. The line of authority between LAIM and the three religious organisations is coordinative and collaborative, rather than directive.

5.1.1 The Formation of LAIM

Before the outbreak of communal conflict in 1999, the religious community in Maluku never imagined that it would be necessary to develop an inter-religious organisation.[391] Initiatives for communicating and cooperating across religions were extremely limited. The members of each religious institution were absorbed with its routine activities and ignored the underlying problems of inter-religious relations in Malukan society. Contemporarily, religious communities in Ambon were extremely confident that *pela* and *gandong*, their traditional inter-communal brotherhood and sisterhood, were sufficiently strong to prevent the outbreak of communal violence.[392]

However, religious war raised the Malukan people's awareness that their traditional conflict management system was not sufficiently strong to prevent the eruption of conflict. In the face of a long history of disharmonious community relations—by which people lived in villages that were segregated according to religious affiliation, and stigmatised and held prejudices toward "the others"—some religious activists proposed the idea of establishing opportunities for inter-religious encounters.[393] This led Malukan religious leaders to meet to explore the possibility of establishing an inter-faith institution. In addition, because Malukan leaders outside Maluku claimed and spoke in

[391] Interview with Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Ambon City, 2 August 2011. He was the first executive director of LAIM.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Ibid.

public and even received funding on behalf of Malukan inter-religious communities, the process of forming of an inter-religious body in Maluku was accelerated because locals did not want "outsiders" to speak on their behalf.[394]

Three religious organisations, namely, the Council of Indonesian *Ulama* (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) (MUI), the Synod of the Protestant Church of Maluku (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*) (GPM), and the Catholic Diocese of Amboina (*Keuskupan Amboina*) formally joined the initiative to develop an inter-religious institution based on the spirit of inter-religious theology. My interviews with the religious leaders of these organisations reveal that they shared a common concern and that they realised that an inter-religious institution that could facilitate encounters and cooperation as part of the reconciliation process in post-conflict Maluku was needed. They were fully aware that the inter-religious dialogue that they would establish would not only have a public relations purpose. They also realised that they needed to commit themselves to work together for peace. More importantly, the inter-religious institute that they would establish had to solve real problems within religious communities where the desire for revenge and retaliation was still considerable. Having learnt from the conflict, they believed that they could not only think about their own religion but that they also had to relate their religion to other religious beliefs.[395]

In 2003, LAIM, the first inter-religious institution in Maluku's history, was formally established. Religions in Maluku adjusted their theological position in response to conflict and, particularly, to the post-conflict situation. Religions that were previously involved in bloody religious conflict turned to engage in promoting inter-religious dialogue as an avenue to achieve peace and harmony.

5.1.2 From Inclusive Theology to Practical Peacebuilding Activities

In the context of post-conflict peacebuilding in Maluku, LAIM strove to be an institution for initiating religious encounters and dialogue, as well as consistently promoting an inclusive theology that was based on, in its own terminology, multiculturalism, pluralism, and humanity as common values to attain a durable and sustainable peace in Maluku.[396] The use of the terms *multiculturalism*, *pluralism*, and *humanity* might seem to suggest that LAIM follows a Western approach to religious and ethnic diversity. Abidin Wakano, the current executive director of LAIM, agreed that multiculturalism and pluralism are constructed in the Western tradition. However, along with the process the HoP, he also argued that the essence of these concepts could be found in all religious

[394] Ibid.
[395] Interview with Chairman of three official religious institutions: Idrus Tukan (MUI), Ambon City, 19 July 2011; Bishop Petrus Mandagi (Diocese of Amboina), Ambon City, 18 July 2011; John Ruhulessin (GPM), Ambon City, 12 July 2011.
[396] This was taken from the profile of LAIM. The profile is also available online. See http://lembagaantarimanmalukuen.wordpress.com Accessed on 20 December 2011.

traditions. The Qur'an, for example, recognises the plurality and diversity of culture and religion and encourages believers to build inter-communal communication to know and respect other traditions.[397] Additionally, according to Wakano, Islam strongly prohibits Muslims from imposing their Islamic values on other religious believers because the Qur'an states that "there is no compulsion in religion."[398] Similarly, numerous verses in the Bible encourage believers to promote and celebrate diversity.

Moreover, the process of the HoP interplays the understanding of two mainstream Abrahamic religions, Islam and Christianity, with the recognition of the ancestral beliefs of the people of Maluku. Wakano claimed that the concepts of pluralism and multiculturalism are longstanding in Maluku, perhaps existing long before scholars in the Western tradition coined the concept. Malukan ancestors, according Wakano, had already established, through local wisdom, the spirit of *orang basodara* (inter- and religious siblinghood), which promoted values and practices that resonate with contemporary ideas of pluralism and multiculturalism.[399]

In this context, the flexibility of LAIM as an unofficial religious institution becomes evident in constructing its dialogue mission. Firstly, LAIM, as a local interfaith organisation, did not hesitate to adopt, adapt, and contextualise the modern discourses of pluralism, humanism, and multiculturalism beyond the local context. Secondly, LAIM strongly realised the need to preserve and promote existing traditional values, namely, the spirit of *orang basodara*, which is embedded in the long history of the people of Maluku—a spirit and values that could be utilised for the peacebuilding process.

The question that arises, then, is how LAIM's inclusive theology contributed to solving Maluku's problems. LAIM was established as a response to both the local dynamics of the conflict in Maluku and the post-conflict damage to the social and cultural fabric. To cope with this situation, LAIM tried to overcome exclusive theology as the foundation of its presence in Maluku, and, instead, focused on practical programmes and activities at a community level. In doing so, LAIM learned and borrowed the approaches that the secular NGOs employed in implementing community development programmes. Consequently, LAIM organised interfaith dialogue in Maluku informally and flexibly, in contrast with other forms of interfaith dialogue that were suggested in some scholarly works.[400]

LAIM introduced the so-called "faith-based community dialogue" strategy, which used forms of social capital, such as family and *adat* relations, school alumni networks, clubs, and hobbies, that

[397] Interview with Dr. Abidin Wakano, Ambon City, 8 July 2011. He is current executive director of LAIM.
[398] See the Qur'an, *Al-Baqara* (2:256)
[399] Interview with Abidin Wakano.
[400] See, for example, Mohammad Abu-Nimer, "Conflict Resolution, Culture and Religion: Toward a Training Model of Interreligious Peacebuilding," *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 38, no. No. 6 (2001); David R. Smock, ed. *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2007).

did not totally disintegrate during the conflict. At first, LAIM identified a small group of people to be the core group of a coalition for peace. Each member of the core group slowly increased the number of people who participated in the encounters according their interests and professions. The LAIM, then, could facilitate inter-religious dialogue or encounters among religious leaders, journalists, academicians, lawyers, youths, women, dancers, and truck drivers, among others. The dialogue and encounter processes were organised using a participatory approach that provided equal opportunity for each participant to express their feelings and thoughts freely. The dialogue also involved a bottom-up process, whereby LAIM did not impose its own ideas on people. The dialogue process was usually organised in informal settings that allowed participants to feel at home. LAIM often chose *Rumah Kopi* (a local term for café) as a favourite place to organise dialogue because it offered a friendly environment.[401]

The LAIM activists underlined the importance of meetings as a basis for their work because Malukans would have been unable to solve their substantial problems (including reconciliation and sustainable peace) if they were reluctant to even meet at all.[402] Enabling people from different religious backgrounds in a post-religious war period to meet, even if "only" to say "hello," joke, and laugh together, should count as a considerable achievement in the circumstances.[403]

LAIM activists always ensured that dialogue started in a conducive environment. In the encounters, participants started conversations that principally concerned "practical dialogue," which consisted of light and practical topics that would not provoke controversies. This strategy, according to Manuputty, the first executive director of LAIM, was called, in the local language, "eating hot porridge." Eating a plate of hot porridge should begin from the edge of the plate, from the part that is not excessively hot. Avoiding sensitive and controversial issues during the first encounters was critical as a transition to more complicated topics.[404]

Conflict fatigue among Christians and Muslims, and especially the shared sense of suffering, was an entry point to start conversations about shared responsibilities for societal well-being. In other words, LAIM organised interfaith dialogue to identify common social and humanitarian problems and address them together. They believed that recognising common concerns and problems could help people identify common ground for resolving common social problems in a shared living space.[405]

Practical dialogue does not mean that LAIM does not promote or become involved in "theological dialogue." Yet, unlike the theological dialogues that have been suggested by some

[401] Interview with Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Ambon City, 7 July 2011.
[402] Ibid.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Interview with Manuputty.
[405] Ibid.

scholars and official religious institutions, which emphasize, for example, theological discourse on the concepts of salvation, truth, and the ultimate goal of religion, LAIM conducted theological dialogue with a greater focus on how to encourage religious leaders and adherents to rethink religion. This would ensure that their interpretations could encourage people to recognise and respect religious diversity and improve the cohesiveness and togetherness of Malukans. The theological dialogues were intended to strengthen the commitment of the people who were involved in the peacebuilding process and ensure that their efforts to walk in the path of peace could be justified because they were sturdily grounded in strong theological argument.[406]

One of the LAIM programmes that was directly linked to theological dialogue consisted of peace sermons. The aim of this programme was to equip Christian and Muslims leaders with the understanding of and skills for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Often, religious ceremony and propagation were conducted in manners that provoked hatred and prejudice,[407] whereas, through the peace sermons, religious leaders from different religious backgrounds learnt and shared those elements or insights from each other's religious traditions that could contribute to peace. The religious leaders also made practical guidelines on how to deliver religious messages that were in line with the spirit of peacebuilding, and drafted written samples of *khutbah* (materials that are used in religious sermons and propagation). The practical guides and samples of *khutbah,* then, were distributed to religious leaders, mosques, and churches.[408]

Additionally, LAIM conducted direct actions. In the social unrest in Ambon City on 11 September 2011, a few hours after the outbreak of hostilities, an informal network of LAIM established a group called "Peace Provocateurs."[409] Having learned from the conflict in 1999, Peace Provocateurs realised that the flow of information is crucial in preventing the escalation of conflict. Miscommunication and information can easily trigger larger riots, especially when a rumour could rapidly lead to violence, because, for instance, it only circulated within a single religious group and channels to clarify the rumour in other religious communities were absent. This realisation led the Peace Provocateurs, composed of young Ambonese Christian and Muslim, to focus on spreading peace messages and clarifying negative rumours within communities through telephone, text messages, Blackberry messenger (BBM), and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.[410]

In one case, Peace Provocateurs debunked the rumour that the Silo Church, which was one of the largest of the GPM historical churches in the Ambon City and was located in an area marking

[406] Interview with Wakano.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Report of Peace Sermon by LAIM 2007.
[409] Most of Peace Provocateurs activists are "member" of Ambon Bergerak, an informal association of several youth communities in Maluku, such as bloggers, dancers, photographers, and music bands. They promote social activities across religious lines.
[410] Conversations with Peace Provocateur activists, Ambon, 10 January 2012.

the border between Christian and Muslim communities, had been burnt down by Muslims. The rumour provoked some Christian communities to mobilise and prepare to defend their community, or even attack Muslim communities in retaliation. A Muslim Peace Provocateurs member who obtained this information from his Christian Peace Provocateurs colleagues went to the Silo Church and took a picture of the Church with his mobile phone. He then sent the picture that he had taken through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blackberry messenger, and WhatsApp) to clarify that the Silo Church had not been burnt down.[411] As noted in a report by the International Crisis Group, the work of Peace Provocateurs helped to deescalate the tension.[412] The formation of Peace Provocateurs, according to Manuputty, who was actively involved in the Peace Provocateur initiatives, was only possible because of the long process of informal communication, encounters, and dialogue that had built trust among people from different religious backgrounds. Because of it, they could form a new understanding of the conflict dynamics that were based on a religious perspective that promoted peace rather than violent conflict.[413]

To summarise, this section demonstrates one among numerous avenues in which religion can contribute to peacebuilding. The interfaith organisation, LAIM, provided a way in which religious resources could be flexibly mobilised for peacebuilding. The involvement of three religious institutions in the establishment of LAIM demonstrates the ambivalent nature of religion, whereby the institutions had been involved in the conflict to a degree, but subsequently turned to use religious resources to organise interfaith dialogue as a tool for reconciliation in Maluku. The turning point was a part of the HoP process, where LAIM showed that members of religions, who, previously, had been theological exclusivists and who had engaged in animosity and mutual distrust, became inclusive and cared for each other in promoting peace and reconciliation through an interfaith organisation.

Furthermore, the fact that LAIM acted somewhat independently from official religious organisations allowed it the flexibility to adopt a "secular" community-based approach, which in turn allowed it to reach the wider community through interfaith dialogue (e.g., religious leaders, journalists, academicians, lawyers, youths, women, dancers, and truck drivers). The informal approach (such as the "eating hot porridge" strategy, and talking about practical issues for peace by contending with practical social and economic issues first and theological justification for peace later) allowed people from different religious backgrounds to interact slowly to deepen and improve relationships.

[411] Ibid.
[412] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Indonesia: Trouble Again in Ambon," 4-5.
[413] Interview with Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Ambon City, 10 January 2012.

Having discussed the contribution of religion through an interfaith organisation, I now turn to discuss another avenue of using religious resources for peacebuilding, namely, through a women's movement. I investigate the role of women believers in the Concerned Women's Movement (*Gerakan Perempuan Peduli*) (GPP).

5.2 Religious Women for Peace: The Concerned Women's Movement

Whereas the role of the Concerned Women's Movement (*Gerakan Perempuan Peduli*) (GPP) in the peacebuilding process in Maluku[414] has been the subject of research, the current approach of such research tends to analyse the GPP as a "normal" NGO that works for humanitarian relief. This approach does not fully capture the motivations that led to the establishment of the GPP. From my interviews with the founders of the GPP, it is clear that the formation of the GPP was strongly motivated by the religious understandings of its activists. In this section, I extend my argument that religion is extremely flexible and sufficiently fluid to work with—and at times adopt—other non-religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding. As I argue, religious women in the conflict-torn society could pursue an HoP where strong conviction about the sacred mission of peace was combined with a feminist approach to reread religious texts and guide their engagement in the peacebuilding process.

5.2.1 The Formation of GPP

On 6 August 1999, some Maluku Catholic nuns and Protestant women pastors met together in the hall of Rinamakana Foundation (a Catholic institution) to discuss the possibility of organising concrete actions to overcome the bitter reality that the religious conflict in Maluku has caused.[415] Some ideas emerged from the meeting. One practical action that they agreed upon was to recite a common prayer for peace, personally or with their family, every night at 10 p.m. As believers, they believed in the power of prayer. The most critical idea that originated from the meeting was to invite Muslim women to form an inter-communal and inclusive forum where Christians, Catholics, and Muslim women in Maluku could stand up together to campaign for an end to the violent conflict.

After the meeting in the Rinamakana Hall, those women, led by Sr. Francesco Moens FDNSC, met Paula Renyaan, the Vice Governor of Maluku (a Catholic woman) to explain the idea to establish a women's network for peace. Because interpersonal communication between Christians and Muslims was extremely difficult at the time, Paula Renyaan had asked the

[414] See for exampleTrijono, *Keluar Dari Kemelut Maluku*; Ratnawati, *Maluku Dalam Catatan Seorang Peneliti*.
[415] Interview with Sr. Brigitta Renyaan, Ambon City, 14 July 2011. She was Co-Chair of the GPP (Catholic).

Governor's wife, Ica Latuconsina (a Muslim), to establish communication and discuss the idea with Muslim women. Finally, the first meeting between 15 Christian and 15 Muslim women was held in the Governor's house on 7 August 1999.[416]

The first hours of the meeting were particularly tense. Both women's groups blamed each other as perpetrators of the conflict. Prejudiced views were expressed acrimoniously in the forum. With passion, Ica Latuconsina moderated the meeting allowing everyone to speak freely and express his or her thoughts and feelings.[417] According to Sr. Brigitta, it was the first time that "reconciliation" took place in Maluku. By the end of the meeting, they came to the realisation that they all were, in fact, victims of the conflict.[418] Furthermore, they agreed to establish an informal women's network called *Gerakan Perempuan Peduli* (GPP).

5.2.2 Religious Motivation

As mentioned, previous research on the GPP simply concluded that it is a semi-governmental rather than a non-government organisation, because some of its activists were civil servants and the wives of high-ranking officials in Maluku.[419] From my interviews, it became extremely clear that religion had a central place in this movement. The initial meetings of the GPP, which, as mentioned, were the initiative of women pastors and nuns, took place in Rinamakana Hall, which belonged to the Catholic organisation. The impetus to organise the meetings was the belief that the deep involvement of religion in the Maluku conflict was irrational and, yet, also contradicted the most fundamental teachings of all the religions, which is to spread peace and bless all humanity.[420]

A crucial question that arises is why the GPP activists could use religion as a resource for peacebuilding, whereas the vast majority of people in Maluku used religious language and emotions to foment religious war. According to some the GPP activists, the active engagement of the GPP in peacebuilding was possible because of the ability of religious women to perceive the conflict from perspective that differed from that of most people.[421] Almost all Malukan men were actively engaged in the conflict. They did not care about how the conflict affected the daily lives of children as the future generation of Maluku. They claimed that they went to the battlefields to defend God and their religion. The GPP activists considered non-violence as a critical religious insight.[422]

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[416] Ibid.
[417] Interview with Zuliana Latuconsina, Ambon City, 2 August 2011. She is one of the Muslim leaders in the GPP. She is also one of the sisters of the Governor of Maluku at that time.
[418] Interview with Renyaan.
[419] Trijono, *Keluar Dari Kemelut Maluku*, 152.
[420] Interview with Renyaan.
[421] Interview with Latuconsina and Renyaan.
[422] Ibid.

The different perspective of the GPP was possible because of a deep and long process of prayers, reflection, and reading of the Holy Books that led to, what might be called, a hermeneutics of peace (HoP).[423] In the HoP, the GPP activists used a feminist approach. They claimed that a feminist approach to sacred texts, an approach that was first established in the non-religious tradition, had offered "new eyes" for women in Maluku to reinterpret, rejuvenate, and contextualise their religious understanding.[424] The feminist approach to the HoP produced a more peaceful understanding of religion, which saw all Malukans as brothers and sisters who should not be involved in a religious war.[425]

The GPP activists did not have a definition of what they called the feminist approach to sacred texts. However, through my intensive interviews with some GPP activists, I found the spirit of a feminist approach that is linked to the HoP could be identified in three profoundly meaningful points. First, the women believed that according to their faith, life is the most valuable gift from God and, therefore, should be maintained and guarded.[426] No one has right to take somebody else's life.[427] Secondly, women are honoured by God to maintain and safeguard human lives. God gives women a miraculous privilege to bring forth life.[428] Therefore, women must be involved in serious endeavours to defend human lives.[429] Thirdly, the GPP activist directly used the verses in the New Testament that encouraged and motivated the GPP to get involved in peacebuilding. It is a worth quoting those specific verses:

> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against him. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.[430]

According to Margaretha, the feminist reading of this particular verse in the Epistles could be interpreted as an obligation for all humankind to engage in a ministry of reconciliation and peacebuilding. This includes having the courage to oppose the populism that supported the prolongation of the conflict.[431]

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[423] David Little, ed. *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 438.
[424] Interview with Rev. Margaretha Hendriks, Ambon City, 15 January 2013. She is co-chair of the GPP (Protestant).
[425] Ibid.
[426] Interview with Rev. Margaretha Hendriks, Ambon City, 12 July 2011.
[427] Ibid.
[428] Ibid.
[429] Ibid.
[430] 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21. Interview with Hendriks, Ambon City, 15 January 2013. See *The Holy Bibble New International Version*, (Colorado Springs: International Bible Society, 1984).
[431] Interview with Hendriks.

The GPP activists also directly used passage of the Old Testament as a religious resource to inspire their engagement in peacebuilding. The feminist approach to rereading the verse that is quoted below produced an interpretation that reflects the view that human beings are obliged to become involved in peacebuilding, which is symbolized by the obligation to turn "death machinery" into "life machinery." In my interview, Margaretha opened and read the verse below:

> In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many people will come and say "come, let us go up the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in the paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many people. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation nor will they train for war anymore.[432]

On the Muslim side, the Qur'an also mentions that Muslims should fully recognise and respect human diversity and plurality among religions, nations, and tribes, not to fight them, but to learn from them:

> O humanity! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah (he who is) the most righteous of you…[433]

In this context, the feminist approach to sacred texts helped to explain further the ambivalence of the sacred. The sacred texts, as explained above, have been used to support and mobilise conflict. The process of the HoP in the GPP, which employed a feminist approach, enabled the GPP activists to select some verses in the Holy Books that clearly advocate peace and exclude verses that promote violence. Then, the feminist approach helped to produce peaceful interpretations of the sacred texts that oblige the women to engage in peacebuilding as a "ministry of reconciliation" by destroying "war machineries" and building "life machineries," including being promoters of dialogue to building mutual understanding across genders, tribes, and religious lines. Moreover, in the GPP, peaceful interpretations of religion were not only produced for intellectual and academic purposes but were also translated into concrete missions and actions for peacebuilding.

[432] Isaiah 2: 2-4. Interview with Hendriks. He read the Indonesian translation of the Bible to me. I use the English version from *The Holy Bibble New International Version*.
[433] Al-Hujarat (49: 13). Interview with Latuconisna.

5.2.3 Concrete Mission and Actions

After numerous meetings, the GPP activists formulated the GPP moral mission statement: "We, Muslim, Protestant, and Catholic Maluku women have a strong commitment from the bottom of our heart to work together, hand in hand, to sow awareness among Maluku people that violence will never solve our problems. Instead, violence will worsen the situation."[434]

There are three objectives of this movement: (1) to immediately stop violence and brawls, (2) to conduct programmes to initiate reconciliation, and (3) to advocate the rights of women and children. In order to organise the movement, three religious women were appointed as the Coordinators of the GPP: Rev. Margaretha Hendriks, from the Protestants, Retty Assegaf, from the Muslims, and, Sr. Brigitta Renyaan, PBHK, from the Catholics.

The GPP's programmes can be classified into two types of activities. Firstly, the GPP organised public campaigns and advocacy. The GPP had approached, visited, and conducted public hearings with the government, parliament, police, and military officers to convince them to take measurable policies to stop the bloody conflict. The GPP's activists were invited to speak regularly on local TV (TVRI) and Radio (RRI) where they campaigned for peace alongside their other public campaigns, such as organising press conferences, as well as peace demonstrations. To publicise their ideas, the GPP's activists produced campaign materials, such as pamphlets and bandanas, that were distributed to Christian and Muslim communities.

Secondly, the GPP organised humanitarian programmes. The GPP had been particularly active in delivering humanitarian relief, not only for short-term targets, such as distributing food and medicine, but also for to achieve long-term goals, such conducting training for trauma healing, workshops for volunteers to provide informal education in refugee camps, and initiating encounters between Christian and Muslim youth.[435] Some of the GPP activists, including Sr. Brigitta and Rev. Margaretha were among the signatories of the Malino II Peace Agreement. To some extent, this demonstrates that the public, including the government and religious elites, recognised their work.

To summarise, in this section, my argument that religion, including unofficial religious institutions, offers pluralistic avenues of contributing to peacebuilding is confirmed. Whereas, in the previous section, I demonstrated that religion could contribute to peacebuilding through interfaith organisations, in this section I provided evidence that religion employed for peacebuilding through a women's organisation, the GPP, which used a feminist conceptual approach, which was developed principally in the secular tradition, as a new approach to reread the sacred texts. The religious women in Maluku, by adopting a feminist perspective, engaged in a series of discussions and reflections to reinterpret and contextualise their sacred texts. "New eyes" to read sacred texts

[434] Personal documents of Sr. Brigitta Renyaan, a Coordinator of the GPP.
[435] Interview with Renyaan.

produced a new understanding of religion that could be used to motivate and energise the GPP activists to firmly mobilise and stand up to establish peace, while numerous (male) religious leaders were fighting on the battleground. The GPP is an example of grassroots reconciliators who used religion as their primary driving force. This, again, demonstrates the ability of religion to contribute to peacebuilding in pluralistic and different manners.

Having discussed the flexibility of the GPP's effort to adopt and utilise secular approaches and perspectives (including NGO techniques and feminism in the HoP process), I now turn to investigate the latest micro-case of the contribution of unofficial religious organisations to peacebuilding. In the next section, I demonstrate how religion operated as a significant resource, partly working in tandem with local custom *(adat)* in Maluku during the height of the conflict.

5.3 God in Peaceful Villages: Seith and Wayame

In this section, I present the cases of Seith and Wayame, two villages in Maluku whose populations were isolated from barbaric and inhuman actions that occurred during the conflict. Specifically, I focus on how religious resources were used in the two villages. Much has been written on Seith, and even more so on Wayame.[436] However, the role that religion plays in keeping the two villages safe during the conflict is overlooked in the existing research. Contrary to earlier research, I found that religious leaders, as well as religion more broadly, played a pivotal role in keeping their villages isolated from violent conflict.

I have chosen these two villages not only because they could prevent bloodshed in their communities but also because they have different characteristics. Seith is a *negeri adat*, a village that is ruled by traditional structures and culture, which have been inherited from previous generations. For example, a hereditary *Latu (Raja* or King) rules Seith. Seith has traditional smaller "units of government," called *soa*, which refer to a group of genealogical ties that occupy certain areas in *negeri*.[437] In contrast, Wayame is more ordinary; a *soa*, or similar systems, are absent. Wayame is much like those villages in other parts of Indonesia that are ruled by national law (the Law on the Village System of Governance, No 5, 1979). Being a "modern village," the people democratically elect the chief of the village *(kepala desa)* in Wayame. These differences mean that the villages use religious resources in different manners, helping to demonstrate the flexibility of religion in contributing to peacebuilding.

[436]See for example Ratnawati, *Maluku Dalam Catatan Seorang Peneliti*.p. 4-; Trijono, *Keluar Dari Kemelut Maluku*; Amirrachman, *Revitalisasi Kearifan Lokal: Studi Resolusi Konflik Di Kalimantan Barat, Maluku Dan Poso*; Waileruny, *Membongkar Konspirasi Di Balik Konflik Maluku*.

[437] Ziwar Effendi, *Hukum Adat Ambon Lease* (Jakarta: PT Pradnya Paramita, 1987), 41-42.

The central findings of this section are that in Seith, as a "traditional village," religion was used to work closely and harmoniously with the local *adat* or ancestral worldview, including *pela* and *gandong*, to promote inter-communal harmony. In contrast, in the "modern village" of Wayame, religion was linked across religious faiths by wider norms, including a "secular perspective," such as nationalism, and "universal values," such as mercy, honesty, openness, and social solidarity as blessings to all humankind, to form a common ground that allowed focusing on peace.

5.3.1 Seith

Seith is a small village that it located in Kabupaten Maluku Tengah, approximately 41.2 km, or an hour's drive, from Ambon City. As noted in the Chapter 2, one of the most concrete colonial legacies in Maluku is that villages are divided along religious lines as either Muslim or Christian. Seith is a Muslim village of approximately 4,712 people.[438] Although all of Seith's inhabitants are Muslims, the village is renowned for its role in saving hundreds of Christian lives during the Maluku conflict. Approximately 143 Christians, mainly from Ouw, found refuge in Seith during the first days of the Maluku conflict. Soon after the conflict erupted in Ambon City, rumours of religious hatred and the use of symbolism that divided people along religious lines spread quickly. Because Seith is located in Jazirah Laihitu, which is entirely composed of Muslims villages, the Ouw people and some other Christians who were visiting Seith, became trapped in a Muslim area.

The question arises as to why the inhabitants of Seith, a Muslim *negeri*, saved Christian lives, while in other parts of Maluku, people had already started to kill each other in the name of religion. The existing literature and the widely held views of the inhabitants of Maluku suggest that this situation was possible only because the people of Seith strongly held local *adat* values. I argue that, although *adat* played a crucial role in shaping the attitudes and actions of the people in Seith regarding Christians trapped in their village, the religious dimension should also be accounted for. As I explain in detail below, *adat* and religion were interconnected, strengthened one another, and, in the case of Seith, could not be separated.

The people of Seith strongly believed in the local *adat* and tradition, which they inherited from previous generations, despite the state's efforts to discredit their way of life. The introduction of, to borrow Thomas Gibson's term,[439] "documentary knowledge and the bureaucratic authority of the modern state" caused "ritual knowledge and traditional authority of heredity" to considerably degrade. The introduction of the Law No. 5 in 1979 by the New Order regime, for example, meant

[438] Statistics of Maluku Province (BPS), "Maluku Dalam Angka 2011 (Maluku in Figures 2011)," (2011); ibid.
[439] See Thomas Gibson, *Islamic Narative and Authority in Southeast Asia: From 16th to 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1-2.

that the role of the head of the village could no longer be inherited. Instead, the people elect the *Bapak Raja* (King) through procedural democracy.[440] However, the transformation from "traditional" to "bureaucratic" forms of knowledge and authority did not totally replace the existing customs and traditions that were deeply embedded in the community of Seith.

Because of this, the people of Seith have sustained the belief that they have *gandong* relations with people of Ouw: a special kinship relation between villages.[441] At the core of the *gandong* relation is a shared belief that both villages are from the same *Tete* and *Nene* (ancestors). For various reasons the ancestors split apart and lived in two different villages, but the kinship bond remains. Some left Seith and established Negeri Ouw in Saparua Island and, although Ouw subsequently became a Christian *negeri* (with Seith holding onto Islam), their brotherhood and sisterhood by blood relations were not broken as a consequence. Because of this traditional knowledge and understanding, the people of Seith had no reason to kill their own brothers and sisters from Ouw, even though they practiced different religious traditions. According to Hataul, it was unimaginable that they would persecute their "family" from Ouw. The strength of the bond is so strong that it is said that they would sacrifice themselves to protect the life and dignity of Ouw people.[442]

Despite the strength of the Seith-Ouw bond, in some places in Maluku the practice of *adat* is negated by religious understandings. In Maluku, local wisdom, such as *pela* and *gandong*, has been considerably degraded because of religious understandings that contradict *adat*. This degradation has occurred in both Christian and Muslim communities.[443] For example, in Liang, another Muslim *negeri adat* (traditional village) that I visited during my fieldwork, Yusuf Abdurahman Luhulima, the secretary of Liang, opposes *pela* and *gandong* systems because, according to him, some rituals and practices are not in line with Islamic teachings. More importantly, he argued that the solidarity that is based on religious lines or on Islamic brotherhood *(ukhuwah islamiyah)* should be considered more important than the solidarity based on *gandong*, which involves solidarity with Christians.[444]

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[440] Although the people in Seith must follow the law (No. 5/1979) that they should elect their chief of village (Raja negeri), those who are elected always had blood ties with the previous Raja. This shows that the Seith people obeyed their ancestral tradition despite the considerable efforts to destroy their tradition, such as the issuing of law No. 5/1979.

[441] Regarding the meaning of *pela* and *gandong,* see Chapter 3 in the section on concepts and terms.

[442] Interview with Mahfudz Hataul, Seith, 24 July 2011. He is one of the respected elders in Seith.

[443] The degradation of traditional beliefs and practices in Christian villages is more serious than in Muslim villages. According to Tapilatu, the renowned historian of Maluku, the process of Christianisation in Maluku by the Dutch destroyed local wisdom and practices and replaced them with "modern" values and attitudes. An obvious example is that the Christians in Maluku no longer speak their local languages. Religious instructions and the translation of the Gospel into Bahasa Indonesia were the primarily reasons for the disappearance of local languages in Christian villages. Interview with M. Tapilatu, Ambon City, 16 July 2011.

[444] Interview with Abdurrahman Luhulima, Liang, 31 July 2011. He is secretary of Liang (a Muslim village).

In this context, the people in Seith have an impressive ability to ensure the compatibility between traditional beliefs and their religion. For people in Seith, the spirit of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* does not necessarily mean that they cannot maintain *gandong* relations with the Ouw people. Rather, the compatibility exists in the sense that both *ukhuwah Islmiyah* and *gandong* require a commitment to love life and humanity regardless of religious affiliation.[445]

Hatual, a leader in Seith, did not deny that some people in Seith questioned why the people of Seith should protect Christians while Muslims were being slaughtered by Christians in others part of Maluku. Opposition to the decision to protect the life of the Ouw people also came from neighbouring *negeris*. Numerous people in Seith's neighbouring villages were cynical and accused Seith's inhabitants of converting to Christianity. Intensive meetings between leaders in Seith were held to overcome this concern. Mosques were used for meetings to announce and explain the leaders' decision to Seith's people.[446] They believed that what they were doing was the right thing in accordance with both their traditional awareness and their understanding of Islam.[447] In this case, the interplay of *adat* and religion are the two principal sources of the worldview of Seith's people. Thus, harmonious relations between *adat* and religion were critical in maintaining the peace in Seith.

Preserving the compatibility between Islam and *adat* was not without challenges. Yusuf Tala (Youth Coordinator of Seith) noted the wave of interventions from "a new version" of Islamic understanding, which has been introduced by religious leaders from "outside Seith"[448]— a version whose origin can be traced from outside Indonesia. This understanding of Islam is quite often incompatible with existing the religious understanding and the *adat* worldview. While religious leaders from outside Seith teach sophisticated concepts of Islam, such as *jihad* and *ukhuwah islamiyah*, numerous people in Seith continue to prefer to learn Islam from their own religious elders, local *imams*, and *khatib* who preach simple moral values of Islam that apply to their locality, including understandings of traditional customs.[449]

This situation reveals the internal plurality of religion. Islam, in this particular context, is not monolithic, but displays positive and negative faces. Islam in Maluku is ambivalent in that it both supports and opposes local traditions. This also demonstrates how people in Seith engage in a HoP struggle to justify that their own belief in Islam is compatible with local traditions in the face of pressure from "outside" that negates the importance of *adat* in Maluku.

[445] Interview with Hataul.
[446] Ibid.
[447] Ibid.
[448] Interview with Yusuf Tala, Seith, 24 July 2011. He is Youth Coordinator of Seith.
[449] Ibid.

The case of Seith is an exception because, through the HoP process, the people of Seith could form a religious understanding that was in harmony with *adat.* The blending of Islam and *adat* became an impetus to live peacefully and harmoniously with people from different religions. Whereas some Muslims were campaigning for a universal solidarity that is based on Islamic brotherhood *(ukhuwah islamiyah)* as the only solidarity that Islam can accept, small villages, such as Seith, werre removed from global Islamic discourses. A different interpretation of Islam enabled those villagers to maintain their belief in Islam while also preserving their local wisdom, which they could use to sustain a peaceful coexistence and prevent conflict between Muslims and Christians.

5.3.2 Wayame

Unlike Seith, which is a Muslim village, Wayame is neither a Christian nor a Muslim village but is mixed in terms of both religion and ethnicity. Wayame, a village of approximately 5299 people, [450] is also a "modern" village that is guided by "documentary knowledge and the bureaucratic authority of a modern state."[451] Unlike Seith, which used tradition to maintain inter-communal harmony, Wayame applied other means to remain the only peaceful village in Ambon during the conflict.

Efforts have been made to explain the "peaceful Wayame" phenomenon. Numerous locals in Maluku argued that Wayame enjoyed peace because of its proximity to a military camp.[452] However, this cannot constitute an adequate explanation because, in some cases, even the military or police offices and buildings were burnt down during the conflict. Another explanation is that Wayame was strategically located in the proximity of the largest oil station in Maluku, which is owned by Pertamina, the state owned company that supplies energy for whole of Ambon City.[453] Therefore, according to this theory, all warring parties including the government, the military, and police officers had strategic interests to isolate Wayame from conflict.

Whereas those analyses might partly explain the peaceful conditions of Wayame, my tentative explanation is that the outstanding quality of the religious leadership from both Muslim and Christian communities played a critical role in establishing common interests and shared values as a platform that could enable the Wayame community to build peace. They used specific universal religious understandings (mercy, honesty, openness, social solidarity, and religion as a blessing to all humankind) and linked them to the spirit of Indonesian nationalism as a common identity. The mix between religion and secular norms was used to form a common ground to work for keep the peace in Wayame.

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[450] Statistics of Maluku Province (BPS), "Maluku Dalam Angka 2011 (Maluku in Figures 2011); ibid.
[451] Gibson, *Islamic Narative and Authority in Southeast Asia: From 16th to 21st Century*.
[452] Conversation with many people in Ambon.
[453] Conversation with many people in Ambon.

According to Rev. Sahalessy, he adopted three principles from the values of the Bible that guided him to work for a peaceful Wayame. First is faithfulness to one's religion. Everyone, including Muslims, should commit and be consistent with their religion and should not be shaken by issues and rumours from outside. Second is honesty. Everyone should be honest with himself or herself to form a clear view of what really happened in Maluku. Third is openness. Everyone should speak and express themselves freely about what they think and feel. This is also a principle to establish dialogue that is based on compassion and mercy.[454]

Sahalessy observed that those values were absent in both Christians and Muslims during the conflict.

> There were many reverends who forgot these basic values and doctrines (of religion). The reverends thought they were right and the other was wrong. Everyone claimed and tried to prove that their own religious community [Muslims and Christians] were right. This is bullshit! In fact, both were wrong and stupid [during the conflict]. Both Christians and Muslims did not make up their mind. They only use their knees [power/muscle]. The problems were not narrowed, but expanded.[455]

Furthermore, he observed why the conflict could not be resolved immediately:

> Christian Reverends invited their followers to come to Churches to be taught and indoctrinated [to get involved in the conflict]. [On the other side], Muslim leaders did the same thing in Mosques. When believers came out from Mosques and Churches, they initiated wars.[456]

At the same time, Muslim leaders, such Imam Musanef, Man Masasabessy, Hanafi, Imran, and others, tried to convince Muslims in Wayame that Islam would never preach harmful things to people.[457] Musanef explained that being a good Muslim should not prevent him from continuing to have good relations with Christians. They believed that Muslims in Wayame should embrace a general understanding of Islam; for example, that Islam is a religion that brings blessing to all humankind.[458] Learning from the situation outside Wayame, Sahalessy and Muslims leaders decided to isolate Wayame from outside provocateurs. They believed that only the Wayame community could ensure that Wayame remained peaceful. They agreed that the believers should be prepared to anticipate problems that might arise.

After meeting several times, Muslim and Christian leaders agreed that they had a common religious understanding and shared political interests to work together to maintain peace and order in Wayame. They could formulate and transform their religious understanding as a common

[454] Interview with Rev. Sahalessi, Wayame, 15 July 2011.
[455] Ibid.
[456] Ibid.
[457] Interview with Imam Musanef, Wayame, 15 July 2011. He is a Muslim leader in Wayame.
[458] Ibid.

platform to work with the Wayame community, regardless of religious affiliation. The first thing that religious leaders did was to remove the religious symbols in Wayame. As conflict erupted in Ambon City, people in Wayame started to display "religious markers" in front of their houses; for example, Christians placed the *salib* (cross) on their house doors, and Muslims displayed Arabic calligraphy on theirs. Muslims and Christian leaders agreed to remove all of these religious symbols. For them, the people of Wayame must be united through a common interest to keep peace in their village:

> After Sunday sermon in Pniel Church, I gave instruction to all Christians in Wayame to remove religious symbols in front of their houses. I walked around Wayame. Some people were reluctant to remove them. I convince them to remove it. I removed religious symbols by myself.[459]

Simultaneously, Muslim leaders conducted the same action within the Muslim community.[460]

In order to ensure efforts to maintain communal harmony in Wayame, the Christian and Muslim leaders agreed to establish a joint working and coordinating group that they called "Team 20," consisting of 10 leaders from the two religions. Team 20 served as a leadership board of Muslims and Christians that could coordinate internally and communicate externally, and as an authority to deal with internal problems within each religion. Team 20 met daily during the eve of the conflict and organised mass meetings twice a week (on Sunday in a church and on Friday in a mosque).

To expand their acceptability and authority, the Team 20 also agreed to establish rules or "codes of conduct" for all the people of Wayame. First, all people of Wayame were to remove all religious symbols. Sahalessi explained to the people of Wayame that

> every Sunday Christians went to Church and every Friday Muslims went to Mosque for Friday prayer. When they stepped out from the church and mosque they are no longer Christians and Muslims. They are Indonesian. And we should work as Indonesians during "religious conflict.[461]

In this case, religion and religious resources were deployed in tandem with secular values, such as the nationalist ideology. Religious leaders linked religion to nationalism to convince people from different religious backgrounds to unite and work together for a peaceful Wayame under the flag of Indonesia as a universal identity and as an alternative to parochial religious identity during the conflict. In other words, the interplay between the religions operated as an organising force for peace together with other forces for peace, such as the secular nationalist ideology.

[459] Interview with Sahalessi.
[460] Interview with Sahalessi and Musanef.
[461] Interview with Sahalessi.

Second, if provocative acts occurred in Wayame, such as the stoning of churches, mosques, houses, or other types of vandalism, each community had to identify the provocateurs within 24 hours. If the provocateurs were found, they had to be ostracised from Wayame, regardless of their religious affiliation.[462] Third, all people of Wayame were prohibited from becoming involved in the war outside Wayame. People who had been identified as participating in the war (helping their co-religionists outside Wayame) had to be expelled from Wayame. Fourth, if someone from Wayame were to be killed in the war outside Wayeme, the body would not have been allowed to be buried in Wayame.[463] In the local tradition, the relatives of a dead person who were not allowed to perform a series of funeral rituals in their own house or community would feel a strong sense of shame, making this a powerful sanction.

The agreement was successful, although numerous provocative acts and infiltrations from both Muslims and Christians from outside Wayame occurred frequently. From an outsider's perspective, both Muslims and Christians in the Wayame community were regarded as disloyal to their religion because they lived peacefully with the enemy when their co-religionists were involved in conflict.

By employing discipline and a spirit of togetherness, the people of Wayame could maintain communal harmony through the spirit that developed against outsider provocateurs and intruders. Whereas, in other parts of Maluku, religious institutions (Churches and Mosques) were used as vehicles to support war, religious leaders in Wayame used their holy places to discuss peace and harmony. This situation demonstrates how religion could be used to organise sacred peace, whereas others mobilised violent to foment conflict. The leaders were able to offer interpretations of the sacred texts that promoted peace that could be used as a common platform to work together, regardless of religious affiliations.

To conclude my discussion of Seith and Wayame, in these cases I found that religion could flexibly adopt and enlist other non-religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding. Through the HoP, Muslim communities in Seith were able to develop an understanding of religion that was not in conflict with their ancestors' beliefs. The understanding of Islam in Seith could work in tandem with *adat* to save Christian lives. This type of religious understanding was critical because in other parts of Maluku, where religious understanding did not support the local *adat,* inter-communal relations were broken.

Conversely, in Wayame, where the local *adat* did not exist, religion helped to protect Wayame from bloody conflict by engaging in the HoP process, which transformed religious

[462] Interview with Sahalessi and Musanef.

[463] In the local tradition, not being allowed to perform a series of funeral rituals for a deceased person in one's house or community brings shame.

understanding into acceptable norms, such as honesty, justice, openness, cooperation, and religion as blessing to all humankind. These norms were used as a common ground to work for peacebuilding in Wayame. Because of the HoP, religious leaders in Wayame also adopted the spirit of nationalism to build a sturdier sense of solidarity among the people of Wayame during the crisis.

5.4 Conclusion

The three micro-cases presented above extend my argument in the previous chapter that religion is not monolithic and static. The first micro-case demonstrated that religion promotes peacebuilding through interfaith organisations. Whereas believers who were previously involved in conflict found justification for their actions in an exclusivist theology, once they became engaged in the HoP during post-conflict peacebuilding, they came to endorse and practice a more inclusive theology. The HoP allowed people from different religious backgrounds to work together for peace and reconciliation in Maluku. Furthermore, unlike interfaith institutions that commonly promoted formal theological dialogue, LAIM adopted strategies and techniques of dialogue from the "secular" NGOs, such as participatory and "bottom-up" approaches. In this context, LAIM could translate the abstract form of theological dialogue into a practical form of dialogue that helped to build trust and create common interests and shared values among Christians and Muslims. The adoption of non-religious approaches also helped to reach a wider range of people in Maluku.

In the second case, peacebuilding missions were conducted by the GPP, a group of women believers that was the first inter-communal group in Maluku to be established during the conflict. This research reveals that the religious motivation and resources behind the creation of the GPP were ignored in previous research. The GPP's activists were involved in the HoP process, where they strove to identify religious texts that would support them in adopting productive and constructive positions to promote peace in the midst of conflict. In the HoP, the GPP activists were open to adopting a feminist approach, a perspective that is commonly used in "secular" discourses. The use of a feminist approach in the HoP eventually produced a more peaceful interpretation and inspired, motivated, and supported women to be actively involved in peacebuilding.

Finally, the cases of Seith and Wayame also confirmed my argument in this chapter: religion has played a critical role in peacebuilding in flexible ways. The Muslims' interpretation and practice of Islam in Seith, which I term a HoP process, was suitable and compatible with traditional norms (*pela* and *gandong*). As the result, the blending of religion with local *adat* became a strong mechanism to maintain inter-communal harmony. The ability of people in Seith to preserve Islam and adat as living values was critical because numerous Muslims and Christians who claimed that the practice adat and their religious faith were incompatible were unable to prevent the violence in

Maluku. In Wayame's case, religion played a pivotal role in sustaining peace in Wayame during the conflict. Through the HoP, people in Wayame could form a type of solidarity across religious lines to work together to ensure that Wayame was isolated from the worst of the conflict. Whereas most people during the conflict in Maluku were ensnared in an exclusivist religiosity, the people in Wayame, through the HoP, could develop and transform their understanding of religion into common, universally acceptable values, such as honesty, justice, and the spirit of nationalism. Based on these universal values, the people in Wayame successfully maintained inter-communal harmony.

Overall, unlike the "secular" assumption that predisposes people to perceive religion as monolithic, dogmatic, and inflexible, the three micro-cases of unofficial religious organisations strengthen my argument that religion can substantially contribute to peacebuilding in pluralistic and flexible fashions. Whereas the official religious organisations, as discussed in previous chapter, have developed formal and new theological understandings and justifications to engage in peacebuilding, to some extent the "the new" theology was used and operationalized by unofficial religious institutions to contribute to peacebuilding through institutions, programs and mechanisms that reached wider religious communities.

CHAPTER 6

Building Peace in Intractable Conflict in Mindanao

Having discussed the role of religion in the process of peacebuilding in Maluku in the previous chapters, I turn to examine my second case study of religious peacebuilders in Southeast Asia. Specifically, I investigate how people use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in Mindanao, in the Southern Philippines, where an intractable ethno-religious conflict has wracked the area for several decades. I present three micro-cases based on my fieldwork to offer concrete examples of how people in Mindanao use religious resources, even in extremely difficult circumstances, to mobilise peace constituencies and inspire people to contribute to peaceful conflict resolution.

I begin by examining the role of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM). I find that religion offers resources, such as faith and Holy Scriptures, which not only inspired the establishment of the SDM but also motivated and energised the SDM activists to promote tirelessly a culture of dialogue. They dedicated themselves to building a sturdier peace in Mindanao through dialogue because it is part of a sacred religious mission and a spiritual journey. The SDM's commitment to peacebuilding was the result of the process of the hermeneutics of peace (HoP) where the SDM activists interpreted sacred texts and utilised them to mobilise and support peace.

In the second micro-case, I demonstrate how religious resources inspired the development of the Space for Peace (SP) in Nalapaan. This shows the concrete power of religion to mobilise and organise grassroots support for peacebuilding in a time of crisis. The people who were involved in the HoP, by re-contextualising and rejuvenating their understanding of religion, believed that religion unites and does not divide. This new understanding, in turn, contributed to overcoming the crisis in Nalapaan.

Finally, I turn to discuss the religious discourses within the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The case of the MILF differs from the two micro-cases that I presented in the previous chapters. On the one hand, whereas the SDM and the SP in Nalapaan are grassroots civil society peacebuilding initiatives, the MILF holds a rather unique position in the Southern Philippines conflict and in its peacebuilding dynamics. As the principal rebel movement actor, the MILF is a non-state actor. On the other hand, because of its ability to exert political influence, the MILF acted like a state actor, including attending peace negotiations with the Philippines government. In particular, I investigate how the use of religious discourse enabled the MILF's decision to attend peace negotiations with the Philippines government. Although religion has been widely perceived

as a force that mobilises and prolongs the conflict, I challenge this common perception by examining how an understanding of religious teaching theologically justified the rebel movement's decision to pursue peace negotiations and seek settlement.

Overall, in this chapter, I reveal that religion has contributed to peacebuilding in Mindanao in numerous ways, thus challenging the mainstream peace studies and international relations position that focuses on religion's contribution to fomenting violent conflicts while overlooking its potential role in peacebuilding. The cases that I presented in this chapter enrich a growing academic understanding of the relationship between religion and peacebuilding, especially the process of the HoP, where religious people in Mindanao used religious narratives and texts to justify their engagement in peacebuilding efforts.

6.1 Silsilah Dialogue Movement: Dialogue and Breaking Down the Wall of Segregation

Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM) was established by Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, PIME,[464] a Catholic priest, with his Muslim and Christian colleagues on May 9 1984. Formally, the establishment of SDM was a response to "religious conflict" in Mindanao and the realisation that conflict only could be resolved through peaceful means, especially by promoting a culture of dialogue. The SDM offers and promotes a form of dialogue that differs from the secular form of dialogue that is practiced commonly by conflict resolution theorists and practitioners. By recognising God as the source of dialogue, the SDM envisions a life in dialogue for all Muslims, Christians, and peoples of other living faiths, respecting, trusting, loving one another, and moving together towards a common experience of harmony, solidarity, and peace.[465]

The term "*silsilah*" originated from the Arabic language, which literally means a chain or a link. Specifically, the word *silsilah* is used commonly in Sufism to refer to spiritual endeavours and experiences that pave the way to God. *Silsilah* also means genealogical tree. D'Ambra's choice of an Arabic and Islamic term for the organisation, within the context of the Philippines as a Catholic nation, symbolises of the inclusiveness of the organisation and his solemn intention to invite Muslims to a sincere inter-religious engagement. Moreover, the term *silsilah*, as a specific transcendental or mystical term in Sufism, is used with the aim to celebrate the diversity of people across religious affiliations, because the very meaning of *silsilah* is "genealogical brotherhood," regardless of religious background.

Arguably, the SDM is a religious institution. One cannot deny the critical role that D'Ambara's use of Catholic theology played in considerably influencing the spiritual journey of the

[464] PIME is the abbreviation for *Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere*, which is the Vatican's Pontifical Seminary for Foreign Missions.

[465] See profile of the SDM. It is also available on http://www.silsilahdialogue.com. Accessed on 25 October 2011

SDM. However, although high-ranking religious figures from the Muslim and Christian communities are among the SDM's executive bodies and on its board of trustees, the SDM has maintained its autonomy as an independent institution that is not linked structurally to the Catholic Church or any Muslim institutions. The SDM seeks to be an avenue for dialogue for everyone, regardless of religious affiliation.

The SDM is suitably resourced, centrally located, and headquartered in Harmony Village, Zamboanga City. From its headquarters, the SDM has made significant contributions to peacebuilding over the last 30 years. During that period, around 2000 people have attended the SDM formation programme, such as summer basic, intensive, and special courses.[466] Some of the alumni of the formation programme are from neighbouring countries, such as Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Some alumni are actively engaged in promoting the SDM vision and mission by establishing Silsilah Centres or Forums that exist in numerous parts of Mindanao, and have even reached some Northern Philippines cities.[467] Other alumni have become activists in their own churches, communities, or NGOs.

In order to promote intensely the importance of the culture of peace and dialogue, the SDM also initiated three sectoral programmes. The first one is the community programme, which strives to provide basic services to grassroots communities, such as providing food and nutrition for children, education, and health services.[468] The second sectoral programme is the Silsilah Youth Programme, called SilPeace, which has the aim of promoting friendships and improved relationships among young Muslims and Christians. Lastly, the SDM has formed the Inter-Faith Council of Leaders (IFCL) with the aim of providing an avenue for Muslims and Christians leaders from different sectors and professions to reflect, express, and share their views in order to strengthen interfaith relations. The IFCL is also an avenue for identifying and anticipating social and political issues. Often, following its meetings, the IFCL produces press releases to convey moral messages and apply political pressure to government policies that affect people's lives in Mindanao.

Having introduced the SDM, I move to examine specifically how religion has motivated D'Ambra and the SDM activists to initiate the mission of dialogue as a part of peacebuilding

[466] Interview with Jovie Emmanuel, Zamboanga City, 30 November 2011. She is the Coordinator of the SDM Formation/Training Programme.

[467] According to an SDM report in 2011, the Silsilah Forums or Centers are present in 19 cities, mainly in Mindanao. During my fieldwork in Mindanao, I was able to visit the Silsilah Center in Basilan, Davao City, and Marawi City.

[468] One site of the grassroots community programme that I visited is the Silsilah Solidarity School in Lower Clarian, a poor, predominantly Muslim, village. The SDM also provides a nutrition and food programme to kids in that area. I witnessed women from different cultures and religions working side-by-side, preparing lunch for the kids. In the other communities, such as in St. Cruz, Pitogo and Santa Catalina, the SDM also built elementary schools, kindergartens, and a *madrasah*—Arabic for "school"—where Muslim children learn to read the Holy Qur'an.

activities. I also examine how they continue to use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in Mindanao.

6.1.1 Religious Resource for Dialogue: Implementing the Second Vatican Council and the Beatitudes

For approximately thirty years, the SDM has been involved in peacebuilding activities in Mindanao, especially by promoting peace through dialogue at the grassroots level. I found that religion has played a central role throughout the SDM's history. D'Ambra, the founder and the key figure of the SDM, engaged in the HoP process. As a religious leader, D'Ambra utilised specific theological concepts and reinterpretations of sacred texts to justify his engagement in dialogue as a religious sacred mission to respond to the devastating effects of the conflict, including the segregation of people along religious lines.

Two fundamental theological resources inspired and motivated D'Ambra to pursue his dialogue mission and greatly contributed to the peacebuilding processes in Mindanao. The first religious resource is the Second Vatican Council (SVC), by which the Catholic Church made "a theological leap" through the HoP. For many centuries, the Catholic theology that the clergy taught in seminaries and preached in churches was an exclusivist theology that gave rise to a negative perception of "others" and to a superiority complex in relation to those others.[469] However, with the SVC, the church revised its basic doctrine that there is no salvation outside the church.[470] The SVC provides a theological justification for openness and inclusiveness toward other religions, especially Islam. An example of this new concept was *Lumen Gentium*, number 16, of the Conciliar Documents, which states the following:

> But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us, adore the One, Merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind."[471]

Again, with *Lumen Gentium*, the Catholic Church recognises that there might be salvation outside of itself.[472] Furthermore, in other another document of the SVC, *Nostra Aetate*, which is well known within the Church as the *magna carta* of dialogue, states that

> The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His

[469] Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, *Call to a Dream: Silsilah Dialogue Movement* (Zamboanga City, the Philippines: Silsilah Dialogue Movement 2008).
[470] Ibid.
[471] See http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html. Accessed on 21 December 2011.
[472] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.

> inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times, they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the Day of Judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they
> value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.[473]

Nostra Aetate continues to explain:

> Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom.[474]

This introspective and self-critical attitude, acknowledging mistakes of the past, alongside the declaration of openness as new platform for the future, influenced D'Ambra's heart and mind to pursue a life in dialogue.[475]

The second religious resource that greatly influenced D'Ambra's passionate involvement in peacebuilding is his interpretation of the Beatitudes. The term "beatitudes" comes from the Latin word *beatus*, meaning *fortunate*. Some English versions of Bible interpret Beatitudes as True Happiness.[476] In this context, the Beatitudes of Jesus, which are found in the Bible (Matthew 5: 3–10), will lead the Christian to "a deeper experience of dialogue and inter-religious dialogue by inspiring Christians to overcome fear, doubt and happily move on together with people from different religious backgrounds."[477]

D'Ambra's book, entitled *Rediscovering the Mission of Dialogue and Peace in the Church in the Light of the Beatitudes: Formation on Dialogue and Peace and Introduction to Interreligious Dialogue*, which provides evidence of the depth of his involvement in the HoP process, includes an outline of the eight Beatitudes (Mathew 5: 3–5) that Catholics should follow. They are as follows: (1) happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; (2) happy are those who are humble; (3) happy are those who mourn; (4) happy are those whose great desire is to do what God requests; (5) happy are those who are merciful to others; (6) happy are the pure in heart; (7) happy are the peacemakers; (8) happy are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice for theirs is Kingdom

[473] See http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html. Accessed on 21 December 2011
[474] Ibid.
[475] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.
[476] See *New Testament and Psalms*, vol. Fourth Edition, The New Testament in Today's English Version (Philippines Bible Society 1981).
[477] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.

of Heaven.[478] D'Ambra's interpretation of the seventh beatitude is that it is an obligation for all Christians, without any exception, to assume a role in peacebuilding activities, which is an essential requirement to pursue happiness. [479] The SDM uses the Beatitudes as an ideological approach to encourage Catholic adherents to become peacemakers as an integral part of religious teaching.

Informed by the SVC and the Beatitudes, D'Ambra arrived in Zamboanga City in 1977 and started his mission of inter-religious dialogue. Change, though, did not happen easily. When he arrived in Zamboanga City, the mission was still considered an unusual approach by mainstream Catholics in the City and in the wider Philippines.[480] It took twenty-five years before the Catholic structures formally embraced interfaith dialogue as one of the crucial ideas of the SVC's documents. The creation of the Episcopal Commission for Interreligious Dialogue (ECID) in 1990 within the structure of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) marked this involvement. Previously, interreligious issues were only incorporated under the Episcopal Commission for Ecumenism (ECE).[481]

D'Ambra advocated for interreligious dialogue through the SDM, but was not alone in initiating dialogue as a religious sacred mission in Mindanao. In the same year of the establishment of SDM, Catholic leaders undertook initiatives within the formal structures of the Church in Mindanao to urge the Catholic structures in the Philippines to embrace and practice dialogue as a religious mission. Bishop George Dion of Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo, for example, released his pastoral letters entitled *Attitudes of Christians towards Muslims*. The letter, which was sent to the CBCP and all bishops in the Philippines, urged Catholics to change their attitudes toward Muslims. Dion argued that the attitudes of Catholics were extremely removed from the teachings of the SVC. He also recommended that the teaching of the SVC should be included in seminary curriculum and in the formation of lay groups.[482]

The Catholic leaders in the South, who faced the impact of conflict on the ground and grappled with its devastating effects, were more open to promote dialogue than mainstream Catholic leaders in the North, who tended to maintain the status quo. This demonstrates that the manner in which religious people interpret their sacred texts is influenced by the socio-political

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[478]Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambara, *Rediscovering the Mission of Dialogue and Peace in the Church in the Light of the Beatitudes: Formation on Dialogue and Peace and Introduction to Interreligious Dialogue* (Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publication, 2010), 1.

[479]Ibid., 15.

[480] Even for Fr. D'Ambra the dialogue is new. Although he came to Mindanao to conduct dialogue mission, he did not how to conduct it in practice because the mission was an extremely new concept and practice in the Catholic Church. He conducted his mission by "learning by doing". Through daily interactions, experiences, reflection, and prayer he slowly systematized the idea of dialogue; this finally led him to establishing the SDM in 1984. Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.

[481]LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace: The Local Church of Mindanao-Sulu Journeying in Dialogue with the Muslim Community (1965-2000)*, 337.

[482] Ibid., 355.

context. Moreover, it demonstrates the possibilities of the hermeneutic reinterpretation of religious texts and of practice in the pursuit of peace. In other words, religion is not static; religious interpretations are dynamic and can be turned to the cause of peacebuilding.

In short, the SVC's document (*Lumen Gentium* and *Nostra Aetate)* and the Gospels (the Beatitudes) have played a decisive role as religious resources that inspired and motivated D'Ambra to dedicate his life to establish peace in Mindanao by founding the SDM. Nonetheless, the progressive theological teachings of the SVC cannot be easily implemented on the ground, even in the Catholic Church, which is a highly structured hierarchical organisation. Change required reflection and the advocacy of religious leaders, such as D'Ambra and Bishop George Dion, who engaged in the HoP processes. D'Ambra grappled to find resources in his religion, interpreted sacred texts in response to "external contexts" (the negative effects of war), and deployed those religious resources to generate concrete actions for building up the community at the grassroots level.

6.1.2 Faith as Energy and Power for Dialogue

As I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, numerous books, reports, and journal articles in the social sciences, which are heavily influenced by the secular paradigm, have documented how religion has initiated, energised, and prolonged conflicts throughout human history. However, my fieldwork findings in Mindanao overturn the mainstream perception of religion as a force for generating conflict. Religious faith, for example, played a crucial role in D'Ambra's decision to become involved and continue in his efforts to promote dialogue. His faith obliged him to start a new Catholic mission, the mission of dialogue, in accordance with of the SVC. Dialogue, in this context, is a sacred mission. The Catholic faith, for him, provides energy and power to overcome barriers and challenges in organising dialogue.

Choosing to promote the culture of dialogue in a conflict zone required self-sacrifices. Without a strong commitment and dedication to interfaith dialogue, D'Ambra, who was born and grew up in Italy, felt despair and was stressed when he migrated from Italy to the Philippines. I found that the D'Ambra's source of dedication and commitment to interfaith dialogue came from his faith. For example, Siocon, the first place where D'Ambra started his dialogue mission, was a very small and isolated town with poor infrastructure: it had no roads, no public transportation, and very poor sanitation. As a human being, he was shocked by the different living standards in Siocon and his hometown in Italy. However, he quickly adjusted to the situation and overcame the challenges that he faced because he believed that the journey to Siocon was part of God's plan.[483]

[483] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 24 November 2011.

Politically, it was not an easy task to organise dialogue because of the mutual distrust that existed between communities, beside the existing armed groups, criminal armed gangs, family feuds *(rido)*, and lack of law enforcement. In the SDM's history, for example, two dialogue activists were assassinated. First, someone gunned down Boy de Guzman, D'Ambra's assistant, in the late 1980s in Siocon. Second, someone who, for reasons unknown, did not wish to see the dialogue mission continue assassinated Fr. Salvatore Carzedda, PIME, one of the founders of the SDM, on 20 May 1992.[484]

In such difficult circumstances, faith came to give energy, strengthen, and renew D'Ambra's commitment. He explained his situation as follows:

> I experienced powerlessness in the midst of so many problems, and began and ended the day with prayer: "O Lord, what am I to do?" My time, my energy, my material resources were not enough to answer all these needs. I was powerless and often felt frustrated. Looking back I realize(d) this was a beautiful beginning, because I started to surrender to God, accepting my human limitations, and relying more upon God's will and plan for His beloved people. I began to understand deeply that this work is not primarily mine but God's.
> This realization gave me energy to overcome discouragement and to be creative in responding to the challenges and call of situations as they unfolded.[485]

When D'Ambra explained to me how complicated Mindanao's problems were, including the poor security to protect the basic rights of the people in Mindanao, including the SDM activists, he confidently said this: "my trust in God enables me to overcome fears and to experience inner peace."[486]

Faith in God, in short, has been able to supply energy to strengthen the commitment of D'Ambra to keep working in the path of peace through promoting a culture of dialogue as a religious sacred mission. Challenges, and even death threats, were overcome by a strong belief that dialogue is a significant part of the sacred mission and religious duties.

6.1.3 Faith: Broadening the Meaning of Dialogue

In recent years, conflict resolution theorists and practitioners have paid greater attention to the concept and practice of dialogue to complement formal political encounters, such as negotiation, diplomacy, and workshops.[487] I found that the SDM also contributed to broaden the concept of

[484] Threats to the SDM activists continue to this day. When I was in a car with Fr. D'Ambra on our way from Harmony Village to Zamboanga Cathedral for the closing ceremony of "Mindanao Week of Peace" a police officer stopped our car and gave the latest intelligence report on a threat to Fr. D'Ambra. He used another car on his way back to Harmony village as a way to mitigate the threat.
[485] D'Ambra, *Call to a Dream: Silsilah Dialogue Movement*, 22.
[486] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.
[487] Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and Global System* (London: Sage Publication, 2002).

dialogue by emphasizing its spiritual dimension. D'Ambra, the founder and central figure in the SDM, also underlined that dialogue is more than simply a formal strategy to reach a political settlement between conflicting parties. It might lead to adversaries reaching a political agreement, but its additional purpose relates to a revised theological approach that foregrounds relations with others that they had not previously recognised. For approximately thirty years, the SDM has promoted dialogue as a spiritual journey and a way of life that should be practiced everywhere and at all times.[488]

Real dialogue, according to D'Ambra, is supposed to originate from heartfelt sincerity and love. Ideally, in real dialogue, people do not only meet when problems arise within communities and part ways when the problem has been solved. D'Ambra wrote that

> [d]ialogue is love in action. Dialogue without love is nothing. It becomes a strategy and a dangerous way of relating when people do not see each other as having the same dignity. It becomes a new way of controlling and dominating others. The real dialogue motivated by love not only requires pain but also gives joy. Real dialogue only can be sustained by love. This is the spirituality that Silsilah promotes.[489]

The spirituality of dialogue that SDM promotes means that dialogue should be comprehensive, including the process of personal and social transformation. Dialogue, according to D'Ambra, starts from God and brings people back to God. It requires a holistic understanding and approach to dialogue, which is supported by four pillars: (1) dialogue with God, (2) dialogue with yourself (3) dialogue with other people, and (4) dialogue with creation.[490] Moreover, because dialogue is viewed as a spiritual journey, the eternal goal of dialogue is to develop a *culture of dialogue* at the grassroots level. This is how to help people achieve personal transformation and experience goodness, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness based on their religion in order to achieve a long lasting peace. D'Ambra explained this further:

> So, dialogue supposes to be experience of life or style of life. This style of life will help to overcome violence, work for justice, give services to the poor. So it becomes motivation as well. I understood to sustain any dialogue you don't need (only) formal dialogue. You need (dialogue as) style of life. Just to say it's not enough I become doctor only because I finished my dissertation and bring me to better job, but I have to have a passion. And inter-religious dialogue offers this passion.[491]

[488] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011.
[489] D'Ambra, *Call to a Dream: Silsilah Dialogue Movement*. p. 10
[490] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City 24 November 2011. The dialogue with creation specifically refers to endeavours to display positive attitudes towards the environment. The SDM involves, for example, organising farmer organisations to use organic farming methods. The SDM also researches and practices the use of herbal medicine. Recently, the SDM was involved in environmental advocacy by objecting to the operations of a mining company that, according to research it has carried out, will have negative effects on the environment and the communities' livelihood.
[491] Interview with Fr. D'Ambra, Zamboanga City, 24 November 2011.

Emphasizing the spiritual aspect of dialogue helped to foster personal transformation on the ground. Alih S. Aiyub, a Muslim leader in Zamboanga who is actively involved in the SDM, observed that the SDM offers a sustainable framework for human relations and interactions to its activists. This is possible because the SDM works for the process of personal transformation based on a renewed understanding of religion in its relation to other religions. According to Ayub, religion in the past

> was used, misused, and abused as a source of conflict. The SDM offers the process of reorientation of human person to rediscovering faiths, so that we [the SDM activists] want to reverse that; religion should be reason for peace rather than conflict.[492]

The emphasis on personal transformation does not necessarily mean that the SDM ignores the importance of structural transformation. The SDM believes, according to Aiyub, that only through honest personal transformation, the true structural transformation can take place in Mindanao, "[you must] transform the person to transform the structure. You can't have peace if you don't have inner peace in your mind and your heart."[493]

More importantly, Aiyub finds that the idea of the importance of personal transformation through dialogue is in line with the early history of the Prophet Muhammad. Historically, the first period of Islamic *da'wah* (call to Islam), which was renowned as the period of Mecca, placed greater emphasis to personal transformation as a solid basis for building a just and egalitarian society. The Prophet Muhammad only initiated structural transformation and political reforms in the second period of *da'wah*, the period of Medina, where, in general, his followers went through the process of personal transformation.[494]

My interviews with the alumni of the SDM courses found that the courses brought a new awareness about their own religion and its relation to others. Rowena J. Macapuji (a Muslim) is an alumna of the Silsilah basic and intensive courses in 2004. Besides the stigmatising of and the prejudice towards Christians that was found in her community, she had a negative experience when living with Christians. When she worked for a private shipping company, her boss, a Christian, forced her to eat pork, which Islam strongly prohibits. After taking the course in the SDM, she realised that not all Christians were as awful as her prior experience led her to believe. Recalling the course that she attended about six years ago, she noted that

[492] Interview with Alih S. Aiyub, Zamboanga City, 28 November 2011. He is Secretary of National Ulama Council of the Philippines (NUCP) in ZAMBASULTA (Zambonga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi). He is also actively involved in the SDM.
[493] Ibid.
[494] Ibid.

> we shared ideas with each other, ate together and slept in the same dormitory. I realised that is OK to be friends with Christians. Just like Muslims, not all Christians are bad...[495]

After she completed the course, the SDM offered her a job as a midwives' coordinator, to be in charge of a feeding programme, a health campaign, and dialogue formation in her community in Lower Calarian. For her, being involved in the SDM is about commitment to sustain the spirit of dialogue.[496]

Esther de Compo, a Catholic, is another alumna of the SDM course who experienced great personal transformation. From the beginning, she found it difficult to erase her prejudices toward Muslims because she grew up in a Christian community that greatly stigmatised Muslims. Those prejudices were strengthened by the fact that her husband was a military officer who had to fight Muslim rebels and terrorists. Ester experienced a personal transformation when she attended an SDM course, which offered intensive interactions and encounters with Muslims that allowed the participants to share ideas, pains, and wounds, as well as revisit their religious understandings. This allowed her to improve her relationships with her Muslim brothers and sisters:

> ....not all Muslim like that [bad Muslims]. Some are good, some are bad, also. The programme in Silsilah is to make us [Christians and Muslims] one [united]... it really changed [me]. If I meet someone from other religions, now, I know how to handle it. As a member of the Silsilah family, I realised whatever religion people have, we have to respect each other.[497]

Having attended the SDM course, Esther became committed to sustaining the spirit of dialogue in her life. For the last four years, she has been one of the SDM's "foster-parents." In every course, the SDM sent participants to stay two to three nights with a foster parent from a different religious background to allow them to directly experience living with people from a different religion. For Esther, being a Silsilah family and a foster parent is an avenue for achieving peace through sustained dialogue:

> It is one way to promote peace. [When a Muslim participant is staying in my house], we are talking each other; asking some questions. Little by little, the negative thinking [about other religions] have been erased. I'm almost five years for being such foster parent.[498]

At the end of my interview with her, she proudly mentioned that she still keeps in touch with her thirteen Muslim foster children after they stayed at her house and finished their course in the

[495] Interview with Rowena J. Macapuji, Zamboanga City, 27 November 2011. She is Coordinator of the midwives programme, in the Silsilah Center in Lower Calarian.
[496] Ibid.
[497] Interview with Esther de Compo, Zamboanga City, 27 November 2011. She is alumna of the SDM's formation programme.
[498] Ibid.

SDM.[499] This also shows how the spirit of dialogue can be sustained through personal transformation.

In short, the SDM has been promoting dialogue that has a broader meaning and has been putting into practice a concept of dialogue that differs from the one that mainstream academics and conflict resolution practitioners promote. The SDM has included the spirituality of dialogue as a crucial dimension to facilitate personal transformation and strengthen the relationships among people from different religion. The SDM offers passion and endurance through personal transformation and by sharing lived daily experiences and sowing continuously the culture of dialogue at the grassroots level to overcome prejudices and stigma, build common ground, and develop the common good as essential requirements to achieve lasting peace.

I now turn to discuss the role of women in peacebuilding. Women usually are a vulnerable group in conflicts. The case that I present below demonstrates the power that religion has in empowering women through SDM to become an essential part of peacebuilding in Mindanao.

6.1.4 The Emmaus Dialogue Community: Women Peacebuilders

The Emmaus Dialogue Community (EDC) is a lay association of Catholic women who have committed and dedicated their lives to the mission of dialogue and peace. The Archdiocese of Zamboanga officially recognised the establishment of the EDC in 1996, although the EDC was formed and began its mission in 1987. To be members of the EDC, the women must make two "vows of commitments": they must be celibate and they must be committed to live a life in dialogue with people from different religions. The EDC members decided to be custodians of the mission and the vision of the SDM.

One point that is relevant to my research question in the case of the EDC is that certain religious texts can inspire women to become "full-time workers" for promoting dialogue and peace. Specifically, the EDC founders used religious texts to inspire the formation of the EDC members who dedicate themselves to serve God through the dialogue mission for peace.

The term "Emmaus," which originates from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 24 ("The Walk to Emmaus"), is the name of a city about seven miles north-west of the city of Jerusalem. In Chapter 24, Luke, tells the story about two disciples of Jesus who leave Jerusalem because of the anger and frustration that they felt at what had just happened to Jesus of Nazareth. However, Jesus appeared to them as a stranger, accompanied them, and taught them about Scripture. While the two disciples were having dinner with the stranger, they suddenly realised that the stranger was Jesus Christ.[500]

[499] Ibid.
[500] For more detail see, *New Testament and Psalms*, Fourth Edition, 254-55.

The story of Emmaus is renowned in the Christian tradition. Numerous Christian foundations and institutions are called Emmaus. One example is Walk to Emmaus, a Christian foundation in Australia. It uses the interpretation and understanding of the Emmaus story in Luke 24 as the vision for

> the renewal of the Church as the body of the risen Christ in the world through the renewal of church members as faithful and committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Emmaus expands participants' spiritual lives, deepens their discipleship, and rekindles their gifts as Christian leaders in their churches and communities.[501]

However, the EDC has interpreted Luke 24 in a slightly different manner. For the EDC, the experience of Emmaus is an extremely obvious example of the Christian spiritual journey. More importantly, Luke 24 also tells the Christian followers to follow Jesus' way of initiating dialogue. Jesus came directly to the two disciples to initiate dialogue. Therefore, for the EDC, God is the source and fountain of dialogue. Dialogue is, in this context, a sacred religious mission. As followers of Jesus, according to the EDC, they should follow in the footsteps of Jesus as the initiator of dialogue, as found in Luke 24. Furthermore, the EDC, in line with the SDM's vision and mission, utilises the Beatitudes and the SVC as the spirit that broadens dialogue, not only among Christians, but also with other religions, especially Muslims.

Aminda E. Sano was 28 years old when she joined the SDM in 1984. Three years later, in 1987, through a process of training, prayer, and reading and understanding the Bible, she formed the EDC with two other women, to which lay Catholic women were consecrated to promote dialogue through the SDM. Now, Aminda Sano serves as the president of the SDM. She explained why she chose to be involved in the EDC as follows:

> For me [to be a member of EDC] is a choice. There were many offers for better jobs at the time. But it is a call. It is God's invitation to serve God and people through dialogue mission. Together with other two friends, we decided to consecrate ourselves for promoting dialogue. This [EDC] is a gift for Silsilah.[502]

The EDC has seven members. Understandably, recruiting more women as EDC members is a difficult task because the membership "requirements" are challenging (i.e., holiness, celibacy, and full consecration to the promotion of dialogue). To accommodate the interest of individuals who cannot fully make the EDC's vows of commitments, the EDC has formed the so-called the Emmaus Circle. The Emmaus Circle members could be single or married and continue their professional vocation, but they share the same charism and spiritual journey as the EDC members.

[501] See http://www.emmaus.org.au/. Accessed on 20 February 2012

[502] Interview with Aminda E. Sano, Zamboanga City 28 November 2011. She is currently President of the SDM and one of the founders of the EDC.

Despite being custodians and full-time workers in the SDM, the EDC established a concrete dialogue project in Santa Catalina, *a barangay* (village) in Zamboanga City with a mixed Muslim and Christian population that was prone to religious conflict. In this setting, small or trivial matters could trigger dangerous conflict. The EDC initiated dialogue and mediation within two communities. Because of the dialogue programme, for the last two decades, the misunderstandings that led to social unrest no longer occurred in that area.[503] The EDC has also operated a social programme to help the community to provide for its basic needs. The EDC also built kindergartens and elementary schools in the community that enabled both Christians and Muslims children to be educated together.

In numerous war zones around the world, women are among the most vulnerable and powerless groups. Whereas people also have been inspired and mobilise conflict by finding justification in the Holy Scriptures, this was not the case with the EDC in Zambonga City. Women play a crucial role as agents for peace. The women in the EDC who showed their ability to become involved in the process of the hermeneutics of peace (HoP), used religious texts as religious resources to inspire and motivate the EDC members and to dedicate themselves to working towards peace by promoting dialogue.

To conclude, at least four significant findings emerged from the SDM case regarding the positive contribution of religious resources to the process of peacebuilding in Mindanao. First, the SDM activists demonstrated that a central element of the HoP is their interpretation and use of sacred texts as religious resources that justify their engagement in peacebuilding through the promotion of dialogue in Mindanao. Secondly, because the SDM activists believed that promoting dialogue was part of their religious commitment, they tirelessly worked for peace because promoting dialogue is not only a worldly matter but also a part of their religious sacred mission that will be rewarded in the hereafter.

Thirdly, related to the second point, the SDM broadened the concept of dialogue that conflict resolution scholars and practitioners had developed. The SDM included the importance of the spiritual dimension to the dialogue process. In a religious society such as that of Mindanao, the spiritual aspect of dialogue facilitated the flourishing of a new understanding of religion and of the religion of others, which helped to create an environment that was conducive to building trust and fostering inter-personal transformation. Now, I turn to discuss my second micro-case, which I used to investigate how religion contributes to the establishment of the SPs in Nalapaan and what religious resources were used in the SPs.

[503] Ibid.

6.2 Giving Peace a Chance: Nalapaan Space for Peace

In this section, I present an example of grassroots initiatives for peacebuilding that were initiated by religious leaders and adherents, as well as non-governmental organisation (NGO) activists. This initiative is a concrete manifestation and contribution of religion to the peacebuilding processes in Mindanao. In the first part, I introduce the general concept of Space for Peace or Zone of Peace. Then, I introduce the SP, which the Nalapaan Community established, and how religion and religious leaders have used religious resources to facilitate the creation of the SP.

6.2.1 Concept of Space for Peace

The concept of a SP, which people often called Peace Zone (PZ), is not entirely new. Christopher Mitchell and Susan Nan defined a PZ as a place 'where the fighting should cease or where certain people would be immune from attack (or from the other damaging effects of being "at war".'[504] They argued that the idea of an agreed PZ has a long history and that it can be traced to the idea of rules of conduct during war, which provide limited safe places during hostilities. Furthermore, they explained that, anthropologically, almost all societies have developed a war ethic and codes of conduct during wars and conflicts, including identifying places where violence can or cannot take place, such as the prohibition of acts of war in market places.[505]

In recent history, two types of PZs have emerged. The first are outsider PZs, which outsiders, such as U.N. peacekeeping missions, create to establish "neutral zones" aiming to save lives and deliver humanitarian relief. These types of PZs were established, at particular times, in Yugoslavia, Somalia, and the Southern Sudan. The second type consists of bottom-up PZs, where members of grassroots communities in conflict zones declare their territory to be a "conflict free area." These can be found, for example, in Guatemala, El Salvador, and the Philippines.[506]

In the Philippines, the idea and practice of a PZ is also not entirely new. The movement and mood for this type of societal action can be traced to the late 1980s. Through the spirit of "people power" that toppled President Marcos, people begun to think how the power of civil society could establish peace in divided societies that were trapped in prolonged wars. The idea of PZs in the Philippines was inspired by the Hungduan community, Ifangao, in the Northern Philippines' Cordilleras, where the community objected to both the army and the guerrillas turning their town into a battleground.[507] The declaration of the first PZ in Naga City, which was officially called a

[504]Christopher Mitchell and Susan Alen Nan, "Local Peace Zones as Institutionalized Conflict," *Peace Review* 9:2(1997): 161.
[505]Ibid., 162.
[506]Ibid., 161.
[507]Ed Garcia, "Filipino Zone of Peace," ibid.: 221.

Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), followed.[508] Avruch and Jose differentiate PZs in the Philippines into two categories. The first wave of PZs occurred in the 1980s and the 1990s as part of Filipino civil society's response to the war between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the New People's Army (NPA), the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines–National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF). The second wave of the PZ occurred between 2000 and 2004 in response to the intractable conflict between the AFP and Muslim armed groups, especially the MILF. Consequently, most of the PZ in this second wave are located Mindanao, the Southern Philippines.[509]

6.2.2 A Brief Introduction to Nalapaan

Nalapaan is one the 42 *barangays*[510]in the Municipality of Pikit. It is a small *barangay* with 350 households consisting of approximately 60% Muslims, 35% Christians, and 5% Manabos/Lumads—the indigenous people of Mindanao. Nalapaan is known as one of the worst conflict-affected *barangays* in Mindanao. This is because it is strategically positioned along the national highway that connects Davao City (the largest city in Mindanao) and Cotabato City (the capital of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao—ARMM). It is seven kilometres from the town centre, the home of the 40th Infantry Battalion of the Philippines Army, and close to Camp Rajahmuda, the third largest MILF camp. Historically, war has been affecting the area approximately every three years. In June 1997, a war, known as the Rajahmuda war, broke out between the AFP and the MILF, and displaced 30,000 persons. Three years later, in March 2000, after President Estrada declared an all-out-war policy, Nalapaan became the battleground of the AFP and the MILF, devastating houses and farms, causing civilian casualties and evacuating 40,000 people to Pikit, including the people from Nalapaan.[511]

In the aftermath of these two wars, the inhabitants of Nalapaan started to consider how to break the circle of war. After several consultations, formal and informal meetings, training, and negotiations, on 1 February 2001, the people of Nalapaan declared their *barangay* to be an SP. Key conflict actors, including the AFP and the MILF, respected this initiative. In 2003, when the war erupted again, people in Nalapaan did not evacuate to Pikit proper whereas other *barangays* did. In 2008, when negotiating parties (the MILF and the Philippines government) failed to sign the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), Ameril Umbara Kato (an ex-MILF commander) waged war throughout Mindanao. However, Nalapaan remained calm. The barangay

[508]Kevin Avruch and Roberto S Jose, "Peace Zones in the Philippines," in *Zones of Peace*, ed. Landon E. Christoper Hancock, Mitchell (Bloomfield City, USA: Kumarian Press, Inc, 2007), 54.
[509]Ibid.
[510]Local term for village. *Barangay* is also the lowest governance structure within the Philippines' governance system.
[511]The Immaculate Conception's Parish archive.

was no longer a battleground; the inhabitants of Nalapaan did not evacuate and even built an evacuation centre for other barangays surrounding Nalapaan that the war had affected.

The success of the Nalapaan SP became of a role model for other *barangays* around Nalapaan. On 29 November 2004, people from seven *barangays* (including Nalapaan) declared their *barangays* to be Spaces for Peace. They called this Space of Peace *ginapalad ta ka*, which literally means "I bless you;" the term is also an acronym that is derived from the first two letters of their Barangay's names: GInatilan, NAlapaan, PAnicupan, LAdtingan, Dalengaoen, TAkepan, and KAlakakan.

6.2.3 Re-diagnosing the Mindanao Conflict and Building Peace from Below

One of the most critical roles that local religious people played in conflict resolution is their ability to understand situations in conflict-affected communities. This is possible because religious leaders live within communities, understand the culture and language of the people, and can recognize people's hopes and fears. Specifically, they also are passionate about working for peace because they consider this a sacred duty.[512] In the context of the Nalapaan SP, religious leaders have offered a new lens for re-diagnosing and redefining the problems within grassroots communities that should be resolved to achieve a sustainable peace. The new lens, as I explain in more detail below, helped to bring people together to resolve the problem that they faced.

The religious leaders in Nalapaan have observed that conflict is more complicated than most people might think.[513] The conventional perspectives is that the conflict in Mindanao is, largely, a political matter: it is a conflict between the MILF, the secessionist armed group that strives for justice and to redress the grievances of Muslims in Mindanao, and the AFP, which struggles to maintain the Philippines national territorial integrity. However, the religious leaders' analysis of the conflict is far more complex. The deep process of instrumentalising religion that has accompanied the conflict has considerable negative effects on the community. After personal and communal experiences with suffering, violence, assassinations, and hostage taking, the people of Mindanao often think that Muslims are identical with the MILF and that Christians are associated with AFP.[514]

Suspicions and prejudices divide Muslims and Christians. It is not difficult to trace how prejudices are deep-rooted among Muslims and Christians alike. Throughout my interviews in Mindanao, respondents repeatedly mentioned the age-old common perception among Christians that "a good Muslim is a dead Muslim." Whereas among Muslim communities a common feeling and perception exists that Christian settlers in Mindanao are an extension of the Spanish and

[512] See for example Johnston and Samson, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*.
[513] Interwiew with Gerardo "Toto" Gamboa, Pikit, 9 Decembe 2011.Toto is Peace Education Officer of Immaculate Conception Parish and the President of the Parish Pastoral Council (1997–2001).
[514] Ibid.

American colonialisation of their homeland. These prejudices and suspicions spill over into the education system in which we find, for example, biased historical understandings of the existing culture and religion of the Philippines.[515]

For many, the story of *Ilagas* in the 1970s, a Christian armed group that was organised by politicians and the military to kill Muslims, is still fresh in people's memories. A Muslim armed group called the *Barracudas* was also organised to take revenge against *Ilagas*. Indeed, the conflict divided people along religious lines. In the current situation, a Muslim leader told me that his Christian fellows in Nalapaan suspected that he was a leader of the MILF. Muslims in Nalapaan also suspected that other Christians were military informants.[516] The idea of SPs began in this social, cultural, and political atmosphere.

According to Fr. Layson, one of the central figures who initiated the SP, 'it is difficult to talk about peace and dialogue when there has been major armed conflict. It creates a "we and they" mentality. It resurrects old wounds.'[517] Promoting the idea of peace in the context of a conflict-torn society is difficult. When Layson helped Muslim evacuees, for example, numerous Christian leaders got angry; some of them even resigned from the Parish Pastoral Council in protest. Many Christians were cynical about Layson's efforts to reach out to Muslim communities. Some of them even started to call Layson, OMI (Oblates of Mary Immaculate), "Fr. Layson, OMILF."[518] In this context, building trust, opening channels of communication, and addressing the Muslim-Christian relationship, as well as healing trauma, is crucial yet difficult tasks that are necessary for building for a durable peace.

In this regard, I identified two critical factors in the process of establishing the Nalapaan SP. Firstly, religious leaders offered a new lens on the root causes of the conflict at the micro-level. People cannot simply pretend that there is no problem between Muslims and Christians or deny its existence. Therefore, one should address prejudices, stigmas, and mutual distrust before it becomes possible to build a harmonious community. To establish a long-lasting peace, one must address the underlying problems within the communities, which means resolving, to borrow Fr. Layson's term, the "unseen war" in the hearts and minds of the people.[519] Secondly, and because of this, religious leaders convinced people in Nalapaan that peace should be built from below, that is, from and within the grassroots community. Throughout the history of the Mindanao conflict, the Government

[515] Ibid.
[516] Interview with Kadtong T Andik, Nalapaan, 8 December 2011. He is a Muslim leader in Nalapaan and a volunteer of Bantay Ceasefire, an independent ceasefire network that was established by civil society groups in Mindanao.
[517] Fr. Robert Layson, "Bridging Faiths: Here Is How Christian-Muslim Dialogue Works, Even If on Small Scale," in *the National Interfaith Conference in the Asian Institute of Management* (Manila2002).
[518] Interview with Gamboa.
[519] Fr. Robert Layson, "Dialogue and Peacebuilding in Mindanao," in *The National Convention of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Women in the Philippines* (Tagaytay City June 27, 2002).

of the Philippines (GPH), the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and the MILF signed and released numerous peace agreements, joint statements, and communiqués. However, people became tired of waiting for the conflicting parties to sign peace agreements. The local people suffered because of the intermittent armed conflict and were powerless to mitigate it.

Therefore, religious leaders understood that the grassroots do not entirely rely on the elites to achieve peace. They have to "act now and here" for their own safety and security. Layson convinced the people that 'peace should be everybody's responsibility. By now, people should know that peace is too important to be left alone in the hands of the government and the armed opposition.'[520] Layson offered an analogy: building peace is like building a house; it is never build from the top. It must start from below, by building a small and solid foundation.[521]

In short, religious leaders have contributed to peacebuilding at the grassroots level in Mindanao. This was possible because, through their daily interactions with suffering people, they could diagnose that understanding the conflict required providing a deeper analysis than what had been offered so far. The intractable conflict, along with the process of instrumentalisation of religion, caused mutual distrust and animosity between Christians and Muslims. A long-lasting peace could only be achieved by addressing those problems.

6.2.4 From Dialogue of Victims to a Culture of Peace

The establishment of SP in Nalapaan, as one model of the grassroots initiatives for peacebuilding, took time, much effort, numerous activities, and the participation of stakeholders in dialogue, encounters, and communication between Muslims and Christians, including during difficult times in the evacuation centres when the wars broke out. The crisis allowed people in Nalapaan to become involved in the HoP process where they revisited their existing understandings of religion, which affected how they interacted with other religious adherents. At a time of difficulty and suffering, the shared sense of humanity, linked to religious sensibilities, motivates people to help each other, often overcoming barriers.[522] The "dialogue of suffering in humanity" has developed an awareness for solidarity across religions. It has helped to start to build a bridge between *the tri-people* (Muslims, Christians, and Lumads).[523]

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[520] *Field of Hope: Stories of Inter-Religious Dialogue and Peace-Building* (Davao City: MNICC, 2011), 43.

[521] "Christian-Muslim Dialogue on Moral and Economic Transformation, Held in Las Brisas Resort," in *The National Conference sponsored by the Philosophical Association in the Philippines, Inc.* (Antipolo City April 7-9, 2005).

[522] According to respondents in Pikit, they could not deny that the help during crisis also came from "secular people," but the role of religious leaders in overcoming crisis, as I elaborate in more detail in this section, were extremely obvious. Even international NGOs, such as Oxfam and UNDP, worked through the local Catholic organisation.

[523] The Immaculate Conception Parish under Fr. Layson's supervision has trained young Christians and Muslims to volunteer for trauma healing, as well as for distributing food to evacuees. It was reported that the Immaculate Conception Parish organised a supplemental feeding programme in 42 *barangays* in Pikit for around 10,000 Muslim and Christian children, which involved at least 800 Muslim and Christian volunteers. Intensive interaction in working

After several months in the evacuation centres, after President Estrada declared an all-out-war policy, Tabang Mindanao, an NGO operating in Mindanao, expressed its intention to facilitate the return of Nalapaan's people to their *barangay*. Together, then, Tabang Mindanao, religious leaders, and the people of Nalapaan began to address the people's physical and mental rehabilitation needs to cope with the effects of the war.

One of the outcomes of the mental rehabilitation programme was numerous Culture of Peace and Inter-Religious Seminars (the CoP). The structure of the seminar is not entirely new. It consist of (l) understanding the Mindanao problem; (2) understanding conflict and peace; (3) conflict resolution skills; (4) cultural appreciation and sensitivity; (5) inter-religious dialogue; (6) visioning and commitment building; (7) healing and reconciliation; (8) evaluation and planning. The three-day seminars, which were organised using a participatory approach, mainly involved small group discussion, case studies, presentations, and reflection.

The CoP became an opportunity to the cultivate self-awareness among Nalapaan's people that they needed to attain a HoP that could lead them to re-contextualise and rejuvenate their understanding of religion to overcome the crisis. One the most obvious principles that religious leaders and facilitators introduced was to raise awareness about the ambivalent nature of religion. The training helped the participants become aware of the tendency in religious communities to apply double standards when observing others who have different religious commitments. They look at their own religion on a normative level (the ideal level: what it is supposed to be or as is written in their Holy Book) and see other religions at the historical level (the actual level: what it has done or how it is practiced in daily life). This double standard might lead to a sense of moral superiority, which, at the end, poses an obstacle to dialogue for mutual understanding. Concerning this, Layson emphasised the following:

> And so in dialogue we begin by looking honestly at who we are. Whether we like it or not, we are not just ourselves, not just our own religious communities. We are in fact part of a faith community that we call Christians. As part of such community, we end up having to bear responsibility for its bad points as well as its good points. We are part of the communion of saints, but also communion of sinners. However good we might be personally or as a local community, we are somehow, connected with that whole history of colonialism, capitalism, military dominance, etc... like it or not, they are our Christian brothers and sisters.[524]

By implementing the HoP in the context of a CoP, the Nalapaan community realised that it needed to transform its old attitudes and perceptions (overgeneralisation, stigmas, and prejudices rooted in double standards) through a new and fresh perception of other religious adherents. In

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together to solve a common problem between these young people has created an environment that was conducive to mutual understanding. Layson, "Dialogue and Peacebuilding in Mindanao," 8.

[524]Ibid., 1.

other words, one cannot make generalisations because a plurality of views exists within religious groups.

One of the Muslim participants in the CoP seminar was extremely happy that the CoP seminar could provide a safe and friendly space for him to clarify that he is not the MILF leader that numerous Christians had accused him of being.[525] Another Muslim participant expressed his personal feeling that he did not want to interact with Christians because they are "pig eaters."[526] A Christian participant, for example, apologised to his Muslim and Lumad participants for his deep-seated perception that Muslims and Lumads are lazy and uncivilised people because he did not know about the discriminatory policies that marginalised them.[527] From the intensive conversations in the CoP, Christians understood that Muslims and Lumads are native to Mindanao and that Christians are settlers. The Christians now understand why some Muslims are struggling for independence.[528]

Based upon this spirit, participants built solidarity and awareness that all Nalapaan inhabitants, regardless of their religious affiliation, have been victims of the war. Therefore, they began to initiate peacebuilding within their own communities: peacebuilding from below that starts form everyone's heart and mind.

After the CoP seminar, religious leaders in Nalapaan continued to become further engaged in the HoP process whereby they revisited and contextualised their understanding of their respective religions to overcome the crisis. Religious sacred texts were central to the establishment of SP. Both Muslims and Christians engaged in a key element of HoP whereby they interpreted and used their sacred texts to support and strengthen their commitment for peace. In the Christian community, the Holy Scriptures, or, to be precise, the new interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, are crucial in this context. Specifically, the stories in Bible that highlight "how to be a good Catholic" in life, including during difficult situations, such as the stories of the Good Samaritan, Matthew, the lepers and the blind, and Mary Magdalene are the principal theological references that are used in the work towards peace.[529] Christians in Nalapaan believe that the core teaching of Christianity is love and peace and, therefore, the establishment of the SP is in line with Christianity.[530]

Unlike Catholics in Nalapaan, I noticed that Muslims do not have "religious leaders" that can give sophisticated arguments and explanations about the importance of developing a common

[525] Interview with Andik.
[526] Ibid.
[527] Interview with Gamboa.
[528] Interview with KGWD. Romeo P. Iligan, Nalapaan, 9 December 2011. He is a Catholic community leader in Nalapaan.
[529] ICP's written documents on *Church Teaching on Inter-religious Dialogue* and *Jesus Vision of Society: No Boundaries-Inclusivism.*
[530] Interview with Iligan.

platform of religion for peacebuilding. However, an honest and simple argument from an ordinary farmer is often enough to prove that the "unsophisticated" process of HoP can generate the idea of peace. Sanggulin M. Cassanova, a Muslim in Nalapaan, had a simple but deep personal experience that he shared with his Muslim brothers and sisters. He concluded that Muslims and Christians are brothers and sisters who should not fight one another because the Qur'an and the Bible teach the same narrative using different language.

Cassanova explained the following:

> I have Bible and Qur'an. When I was reading the Bible and the Qur'an, I found out that in Christianity they believe in Abraham. Abraham in Islam is Ibrahim. Islam believes in Yusuf, which is Joseph in Christian. And then Musa is Moses. Also Jesus Christ is Isa; Maryam is Mary. So, why we are conflicting our belief. We believe in the same concept... There are similarities between Islam religion and Christianity.[531]

In this manner, ordinary people develop a common religious platform by discovering similarities rather than dissimilarities among the religions. For him, identifying similar religious narratives between Islam and Christianity allowed him to be closer to his Christian brothers and sisters. The togetherness is not only a political choice but is also rooted in the history of the religion in which they believe.

Additionally, different interpretations within a religious community that lead to diverse social and political actions demonstrate that a hermeneutical struggle is occurring in which the ambivalence of religion could serve as an opportunity to mobilise for peace. Therefore, no one can claim that his or her interpretation and actions represent a complete interpretation of religion to convince a believer to walk in the path of peace. Abdul D. Tibungcog, the captain of the Nalapaan *barangay* (Muslim), explained the following:

> There are plenty of understandings of *jihad*. People don't really understand what the meaning of *jihad is*, so they go on for fighting the government. This is MILF's teaching of *jihad*. I agree with the teaching that the first (prime) *jihad* is fighting against yourself not to commit sin.[532]

Tibungcog was struggling to find a more suitable interpretation of the concept of *jihad* in Islam for him and his community in Nalapaan. He realised that some, if not most mainstream Muslim in Mindanao, equate the word *jihad* with war *(qital)*. However, for his own and Nalapaan's interest, he preferred to use the "soft version" of the interpretation of *jihad*.

In Islam, in the Prophet's tradition *(hadith)*, the story of Muhammad and his followers who had just returned from the battle of Badr, one of the biggest battles in Muhammad's era against

[531] Interview with Sanggulin M. Cassanova, Nalapaan, 8 December 2011, He is a Muslim community leader in Nalapaan.
[532] Interview with Abdul D. Tibungcog, Nalapaan, 8 December 2011. He is Chief of Nalapaan village.

pagans and the ignorant people of Mecca, is well known. Muhammad said that the *Badr* is only the smallest *jihad* and that Muslims should face the biggest *jihad*, which is an "inner" *jihad*. This *hadith* is reputedly mentioned by "moderate" Muslims, as opposed to the declaration of *jihad* as holy war by the "radical" Muslim *Ulama*. Tibungcog referred to his efforts to establish the SP by using this understanding of *jihad*. In other words, for him, *jihad* not only consists of waging war but also of building a concrete peace project in Nalapaan.

I have shown that religious texts and narratives are critical sources for peacebuilding in Nalapaan SP. They provide ample justification for religion being not only about violence and conflict but also about peacebuilding and peacemaking. Interpretations of the Holy Books have led local peace activists to understand that their work for peace is not only right in terms of the social-political context but also correct in terms of religious teaching. This convinced them that they should keep moving forward toward peaceful resolutions by building a new vision of communal inter-relations.

In the following section, I move to discuss the specific roles that religious leaders played. In addition, I discuss their ability to organise various activities and to mobilise support from across a range of institutions for the peacebuilding process.

6.2.5 Religious Leadership, Networks, and Multiple Dialogues

One of the critical qualities of religious peacebuilders in the Nalapaan SP was their ability to work with different types of people from across different sectors. Unlike the secular perspective, which includes a perception of religion and religious communities as static, dogmatic, and conservative, the religious communities in Nalapaan could demonstrate that they were extremely dynamic and flexible when coping with crises. Through the HoP, as discussed above, people in Nalapaan used a religious platform to unite rather than to divide. The religious moral ground that the HoP produced allowed them to become extremely flexible in organising "horizontal" and "vertical" forms of dialogue that laid the foundation for establishing the SP. The term "horizontal dialogue" refers to the dialogue between Muslims, Christians, and Lumads in the Nalapaan, which is different from the type of dialogue that is commonly practiced in other places around the world because it involves multiple forms of dialogue.

Conversely, vertical dialogue is *dialogue of life* or the daily dialogue of ordinary people in ordinary places, such as farms, marketplaces, evacuation centres, and neighbourhoods. This type of dialogue has no complicated agenda. The dialogue of life consists of encounters that are more

personal in nature and that help to present opportunities for building trust among Nalapaan's people. In Nalapaan, these types of encounters occurred intensively.[533]

Muslims and Christians in Nalapaan also practiced the *dialogue of action*. This form of dialogue includes the aim of uniting people from different religious backgrounds for the common good of all people. The ideas that emerge from dialogue are implemented subsequently as concrete social and political actions. Muslims and Christians worked side by side to initiate and sustain an SP in Nalapaan and to build a *bintana*.[534] The tri-people also participated in the process of renovating of the Catholic Chapel.[535]

Contemporarily, the *dialogue of discourse* also took place in Nalapaan. Here, dialogue of discourse does not refer to the academic and intellectual dialogue that is usually used in conferences or symposia. Rather, it is an endeavour to discover suitable and productive meanings of religious narratives and traditions, as well as Holy Scriptures that can utilise and strengthen the intention to reach a peaceful conflict resolution. Part of the dialogue of discourse is the culture of peace (CoP) training that occurred numerous times in Nalapaan, as I illustrated above.[536]

Finally, the *dialogue of religious experiences* also allows the Nalapaan community to strengthen the commitment to living side-by-side, as brothers and sisters. They share and learn about each other's religious experiences that help to understand the other religions. Every year, for example, people in Nalapaan organise three *duyogs: Duyog Ramadhan* (celebrating the end of the month-long fast in the Muslim tradition), *Duyog Pasco* (celebrating Christmas) and *Duyog Samayaan* (thanksgiving in the Lumad tradition). People come together to the *duyogs* respecting people who are celebrating them. The *duyogs* are also an avenue to renew their commitment that they are three people that cannot be separated by war and conflict.[537]

In addition to horizontal dialogue, religious leaders in Nalapaan can also conduct vertical dialogue, which has two forms. The first form of vertical dialogue is the ability of religious leaders to engage in dialogue with national and international agencies. Although Nalapaan's religious and community leaders are the frontrunners in establishing of the SP, the contribution from local and international NGOs, such as Tabang Mindanao, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, UNDP, and CIDA, cannot be ignored. Nalapaan has obtained support for integrated peacebuilding efforts from these NGOs.[538]

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[533] Interview with Fr. Robert Layson, Colaman, 20 December 2012.
[534] *Bintana* is the house of worship of Lumads. Interview with Ramoz D. Sayarsan, Nalapaan, 8 December 2011, He is a leader of Lumad in Nalapaan.
[535] Ibid.
[536] Interview with Fr. Robert Layson, Colaman, 20 December 2012
[537] Ibid.
[538] Interview with Gamboa.

The second manifestation of vertical dialogue is the ability of religious and community leaders in Nalapaan to establish channels of communication for dialogue with the MILF and the AFP. They realised that the success and failure of the SP depends substantially on the commitment of the armed groups (the MILF and the AFP). My interviewees in Nalapaan had difficulty recalling the details of the communication and negotiation processes with the AFP and the MILF. In short, after returning from the evacuation centres around the end of July 2000, while they were organising the integrated rehabilitation programme, including the CoP seminar, they nurtured the idea of declaring the training as the SP. From approximately July 2000 to February 2001, the religious and community leaders became engaged in intensive communication with the AFP and the MILF. Two of these leaders, Andik (a Muslim) and Iligan (a Christian), recalled that they went together to the MILF headquarters to meet and discuss with the MILF leader the possibility of creating an SP in Nalapaan. They chose the term "space for peace" instead of "peace zone," as commonly used in Mindanao, to reflect the idea that Nalapaan is an area where the people can live normally and peacefully. Whereas PZs in other parts of the Philippines involve very formal regulations and rules, such as the requirement for armed groups to disarm before entering a PZ, the concept of SP is more informal and grounded in the morals and the commitment of the parties and involves refraining from using the Nalapaan area as a battleground. The word "respect" becomes a key word for morals and commitment in the SP.[539] A MILF field commander[540] and a central committee of the MILF[541] expressed his great respect to the people's decision of the people of Nalapan who declared their *barangay* as an SP. On 1 February 2001, people in Nalapaan formally declared their *barangay* an SP:

> We, the Moro, the IPs, and Christians of the Tri-people living in *barangay* Nalapaan, Pikit, Cotabato, for several years experienced severe hardship due to the unending violence in Mindanao, of which the latest was on May 2, 2000. Many of us left our homes including our lands and means of livelihood. We lived at the evacuation centres for more than three months.
> Amidst all these, we still believe in PEACE and we are hopeful that we could still restore and rebuild our *barangay* through our unity and fellowship.
> ...As participants to the attainment of genuine PEACE, we, the three tribes living here, declare our stance, on this day, that *barangay* Nalapaan is as SPACE FOR PEACE where we live freely and peacefully, far from any violence.
> We pray to Allah, to our Lord God, to "Magbabaya", that everyone will respect our DECLARATION and that our SUCCESS will be the SUCCESS of everyone...[542]

[539] Ibid.
[540] Interview with Commander Sabre, Pikit, 9 December 2011. He is commander of 108th Base Command of Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces.
[541] Interview with Mohagher Iqbal, Cotabato, 12 December 2011. He is the Chairman of the MILF Peace Panel.
[542] Cited from the ICP archive.

This declaration has been a foundation for a peaceful Nalapaan. Because of the mutual respect of the parties involved in the declaration, the prospect of a peaceful Nalapaan is not an illusion. In the 2003 breakout of violence, the people in Nalapaan managed to stay in their *barangay*, although there was an "internal evacuation." Interestingly, during this difficult time, great and memorable stories emerged about Muslims protecting their Christian brothers and sisters, and *vice versa.*[543] In the 2008 war, Nalapaan was no longer a battleground of the AFP and the MILF, and even they managed to build shelters for refugees from *barangays* surrounding Nalapaan.

With the establishment of the SP, according to a municipal agriculturalist in Pikit, Nalapaan has better opportunities than other *barangays* in Pikit to implement agricultural programmes, such as diversification of agriculture commodities, seed distribution, fertilisation, post-harvest facilities, which were provided by the government and the international funding agencies (e.g. the UNDP, FAO, and JICA).[544]

To sum up, the case of the Nalapaan SP provides ample evidence that religion contributes substantially to peacebuilding in Mindanao. One of the significant contributions of religion is the ability of religious leaders to instil hope among the victims of war that peace has a chance and that it is real and achievable. Thus, religion in Nalapaan-Pikit was used to re-diagnose the root causes of the conflict in a manner that transcends the mainstream perspective. According to religious leaders in Nalapaan, although religion is not the root cause of Mindanao's conflict, the deep process of the instrumentalisation of religion in the conflict has caused people to live in mutual distrust, hold prejudices, and stigmatise others, and has caused them to become divided along religious lines. This should be the first thing to be resolved, if people really want to establish a durable peace. Furthermore, the religious communities in Nalapaan have been involved in the HoP process, whereby they have been re-reading their own religion in the context of the crisis. Using their sacred texts and religious narratives, they concluded that religion unites people and should not divide. This new understanding of religion allowed people in Nalapaan to build solidarity across religious lines. Finally, the people of Nalapaan showed that the religious communities were extremely dynamic and progressive rather than static and conservative. Based on strong the religious conviction that religion unites and should not divide, they could organise practical and multi-level dialogues with various stakeholders in the Philippines, creating a secure environment that was conducive for establishing the Nalapaan SP.

[543] Interview with Cassanova.
[544] Interview with Susan R, UY, Pikit 12 December 2011. She is a senior staff of Municipal Agriculture Department of Pikit.

6.3 Moro Islamic Liberation Front: Religious Resources for Peace in a Rebel Movement

As I elaborated in Chapter 2, the nature of the conflict between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the GPH is an ethno-nationalist struggle. However, the conflict dynamics have evolved from time to time in ways that include a strong instrumentalisation of religion. In this context, it is broadly accepted that the MILF is an Islamic militant group or an Islamic terrorist cell that uses violent means that are justified by appealing to Islam. Closer observation generates a more complex and nuanced understanding of the MILF and an understanding of how it uses religion to justify its objectives and practices. In particular, for approximately 15 years, the MILF has participated in peace negotiations with the GPH. Religion, undoubtedly, is central to the peace negotiation process.

Aside from political disagreement and ethnic tensions among the MNLF leaders, one obvious reason for the establishment of the MILF was the perception that the MNLF leaders and leadership were considered too weak in their commitment to Islam. Therefore, according to McKenna, with the formation of MILF, the armed separatist movement is widely believed to have refashioned itself in Mindanao into a mass-based and self-consciously Islamic movement guided by Islamic clerics.[545]

Specifically, in his book, which is extremely simple, but also essential among the MILF's *mujahidin*, Sheikh Salamat Hashim, the founder of the MILF, explained: "the ultimate aim of our *jihad* is to make supreme the word of Allah.'[546] In the subsequent pages, he explained that this is (1) to establish a true Muslim community; (2) to establish a genuine Islamic system of government; (3) to practice the application of a real Islamic way of life in all aspects of people's lives.[547] These goals can only be achieved through the right to self-determination, including independence or meaningful autonomous government. The MILF, thus, has an extremely strong commitment to Islamic teachings and understandings as the primary base of their revolutionary movement.

Based on such deep religious commitments to struggle, one can perhaps easily conclude that the MILF is an Islamist peace-spoiler group, a terrorist cell such as Al-Qaida, Jama'ah Islamiyyah (JI), or the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), which use religion to justify violent means to achieve their objectives. However, a closer examination reveals more complex and nuanced relations between the MILF and Islam. The complexity can be found, most strikingly, in how the MILF's religious discourse does not only motivate its members to wage holy war *(jihad)* but also encourages employing peaceful means to address the problems that people face in Mindanao. The MILF's discourse readily exemplifies the ambivalence of the sacred: religion is not only about war and violence but also presents opportunities for peace.[548]

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[545] Liow, *Muslim Resistance in Southern Thailand and Southern Philippines: Religion, Ideology and Politics*.
[546] Salamat Hashim, *Bangsamoro Mujahid: His Objectives and Responsibilities*, Second Edition ed. (Mindanao, Bangsamoro: Bangsamoro Publications, 2011), 7.
[547] Ibid., 11.
[548] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, 281-307.

The prime example of the ambivalence of the sacred in the MILF is use of the concepts of *jihad* and *da'wah* in its religious discourse. Specifically, the manner in which the MILF interprets central theological concepts of Islam, such as *jihad* and *da'wah*, is also a demonstration of the HoP process, where the MILF has used specific verses in the Qur'an and narrations in Islamic history to theologically justify its attempts to resolve Mindanao's problems peacefully.

Despite using *jihad*, which the MILF commonly translated as "armed struggle," the MILF also used *da'wah*. The word *da'wah*, which originates from Arabic, literally means *Islamic call*, or *proselytising of Islam*. In practical terms, the concept of *da'wah* covers numerous aspects of religious activities that are related to encourage doing good deeds and preventing evil, including education, building mosques and Islamic centres, and feeding the poor. These are part of the *da'wah* obligation. However, according to Mohagher Iqbal, the Chief of the MILF Peace Negotiation Committee, in the context of the MILF's struggle for self-determination, the *da'wah* could be loosely translated as a diplomatic approach.[549] Therefore, the process of peace negotiation, to seek peaceful political settlement between MILF and GPH, is justified by Islamic teaching as the principal source of the MILF's ideology.[550]

A key question concerns the socio-political circumstances where *da'wah* or *jihad* could be used as a means to achieve objectives. Salamat Hashim, the founder and spiritual *guru* of the MILF, has explained that

> it is highly probable that adverse external elements may obstruct the natural course of development of an Islamic community, and, in such case, *jihad* will then become obligatory. However, if the conduct of *da'wah* is not obstructed or repulsed by oppressive elements, justification for armed struggle does not exist.[551]

The MILF, according to Iqbal, still uses the religious guidance of the late Salamat Hashim who, as the above quote demonstrates, inspires and guides the MILF to pursue a diplomatic approach *(da'wah)* to resolve the conflict in Mindanao, as long the government is similarly committed.[552] The use of *jihad* (armed struggle), therefore, only applies in extremely specific times and conditions, where, for example, the government unilaterally breaks its commitment to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict.[553]

The MILF believes that the understanding of the concept of *da'wah* as negotiation with an adversary to resolve a conflict peacefully is based and permitted explicitly in the Qur'an. As a rebel

[549] Interview with Mohagher Iqbal, Cotabato City, 12 December 2011. He is the Chairman of the MILF Peace Panel.
[550] Ibid.
[551] Hashim, *Bangsamoro Mujahid: His Objectives and Responsibilities*, 13.
[552] Interview with Mohagher Iqbal.
[553] Ibid.

movement that deploys Islam as an ideology, the MILF must obey what is written in the Qur'an.[554] For example, in Surah Al-Anfal, Verse 61-62, Allah says the following:

> But if they incline toward peace, do you (also) incline toward peace, and trust in Allah: for He is One that hears and knows (all things). Should they intend to deceive you—verily Allah suffices you: He is that has strengthened you with His aid and with (the company of) the Believers.[555]

This verse of the Qur'an, according to Iqbal, is an explicit encouragement of Allah that, for Muslims, attaining a peaceful resolution to conflict is possible. Furthermore, historically, the Prophet Muhammad had given examples of negotiating with Jews and Christians and with the pagan tribes in Mecca. The Treaty of Hudaibiyah was a clear example of how the Prophet Muhammad could reach political settlement with his adversaries.[556]

The MILF leaders have used consistently the religious arguments that I outlined above in justifying their decision to attend peace negotiation with the GPH. More importantly, I found the MILF elites did not only use these arguments as part of a political and tactical strategy but also that they are well accepted as a religious perspective by MILF's military cadres and civilian sympathisers. For example, a MILF field commander, whom I interviewed, demonstrated that he knew that the MILF was in the process of *da'wah*.[557] As a MILF field commander, he had to ensure that all his military personnel should act in line with the peace negotiation process, including complying with ceasefire agreements that they and the GPH had signed. The field commander worked closely with the International Monitoring Team (IMT) committee to ensure that conditions on the ground were conducive, whereas *da'wah* (diplomacy) was an ongoing process.[558]

My conversations with anonymous civilian supporters of the MILF in Pikit and Cotabato also showed that they fully understood the concept of *da'wah* as a diplomatic means to achieve MILF objectives. They were familiar with the Qur'anic verses that allow Muslims to negotiate with enemies under certain conditions; for example, 'if they [your enemy] incline toward peace, do you (also) incline toward peace.'[559]

However, internal friction exists within the MILF about the effectiveness of the *da'wah.* The interpretation and application of the concept of *da'wah* as a diplomatic approach is highly contested. This constitutes a demonstration of the ambivalence of the sacred: the "hermeneutics struggle" to seek the "the righteous interpretation" of religious texts that can be used for peace or

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[554]Salah Jubair, *The Long Road to Peace: Inside the Grp - Milf Peace Process* (Cotabato City: Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, 2007). p. 16. Salah Jubair is 'nick name' of Mohagher Iqbal.
[555]*The Holy Qur'an Text and Translation* trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2007), 187; ibid.
[556]*The Long Road to Peace: Inside the Grp - Milf Peace Process*, 16.
[557] Interview with Commander Sabre, Pikit, 9 December 2011. He is commander of 108th Base Command of Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces.
[558] Ibid.
[559]*The Holy Qur'an Text and Translation* 187; ibid.

conflict. An example of this is the emergence of the so-called "lost commanders" or even the establishment of splinter groups, such as the Bangsmoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), who are led by Ameril Umbra Kato. Kato initially abided by the wider MILF *da'wah*-inspired participation in the peace process. However, the BIFF emerged as a protest and in reaction to the MILF leadership and the GPH, which failed to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) because of the decision of the Philippines Supreme Court that the MOA-AD was unconstitutional. This fact led Kato to perceive the *da'wah* strategy as a failure and to believe that *jihad* should be declared as an alternative strategy. According to Kato, the MILF leaders wasted time negotiating with the GPH, while the root causes of the Muslim grievances were never confronted in the negotiation process: 'we've been going around and around wasting money and look where the peace talks have brought us. The roots of the conflict have not been solved.'[560] Subsequently, Kato added that his newly established armed group, the BIFF, is the only revolutionary group that applies true *jihad*.[561] This shows how in the interpretation of religion, the concept of *jihad* and *da'wah*, are contested as an action and a reaction to local-national political dynamics.

To conclude, the ambivalence of the sacred can be found among armed rebel groups, such as the MILF, which used religion to sustain the war with the GPH for decades. In the meantime, it also became involved in the HoP process where it found theological justification, in particular the concept of *da'wah*, to validate their attempts to pursue peace negotiations. In other words, the ambivalence of religion offers an opportunity to use religion for mobilising support for peace. The religious approach together with the rational-calculative approach allows the MILF to continue their efforts in seeking political settlement with the GPH. In the HoP process, which is the endeavour to engage and utilise sacred texts to support the cause of peace, the MILF also utilised the Qur'an's (*Al-Anfal*: 60-61) and the precedents in the Prophet Muhammad's history as theological ground to interpret the concept of *da'wah* as a diplomatic approach to end conflict peacefully.

6.4 Conclusion

Overall, the three cases that I presented in this chapter demonstrate that the widespread assumption that religion is correlated primarily with violence is unwarranted. The SDM and the Nalapaan SP case show that religion can mobilise people at the grassroots to take active roles in the peacebuilding process. Religion has inspired grassroots communities to become actively involved in peacebuilding because building peace in divided communities is perceived as a sacred religious

[560] For more detail, see http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/44309/rogue-milf-commander-forms-splinter-group. Accessed on 1 January 2012.
[561] Ibid.

mission. It is a religious obligation and a spiritual path that should be pursued by individual adherents because building peace will not only benefit their lives “here in Mindanao” but also because they will be rewarded and redeemed in the hereafter. This belief becomes the energy and power of religious communities in Mindanao to keep working on the path to peace, on overcoming barriers and addressing problems. The case of the SDM and the Nalapaan SP also shows the importance of the religious narrative and the Holy Scriptures that the local peace activists used as a theological justification to build peace in their community.

The SDM and Nalapaan SP confirm that a sustainable peace cannot only rely on formal peace negotiations between the GPH and the MILF. Numerous goals must be achieved at the societal level, including restoring the human relations that the politics and instrumentalisation of religion have wrecked. Religion, in the context of the SDM and the Nalapaan SP, has provided “tables” for dialogue and negotiation on the ground, where people can express their mutual fears, stigmas, and prejudices and move forward with new awareness to build a common platform to develop peaceful communities.

Whereas the SDM and the Nalapaan SP were grassroots peacebuilding initiatives that used religion as resources to mobilise peace constituencies, the case of the MILF was rather different. Here, religion also played a pivotal role; in this case in the rebel movement’s decision to engage in peace negotiations. Citing the narration in the Holy Scriptures allowed the MILF to be a religious and pragmatic revolutionary group simultaneously. The MILF case also showed the ambivalence of religion where religion provided opportunities for peace. Using specific interpretations of the sacred religious texts, the MILF, interpreted the concept of *da’wah* differently from the manner that it is commonly understood in the Muslim community. The MILF interpreted *da’wah* as a diplomatic approach to resolve the conflict in Mindanao through peaceful means.

CHAPTER 7

Advancing Understandings of Religious Peacebuilding

The aim of this chapter is to enrich the understanding of religiously driven peacebuilding by extending upon the foregoing analysis of the Maluku and Mindanao case studies. Specifically, its aim is to more fully consider *how* religion contributes to peacebuilding and how peacebuilders use religious resources. This requires an explicit focus upon the hermeneutics of peace (HoP), which, as revealed in previous chapters, is central to the role of religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao. The challenge remains to provide a more adequate conceptualisation of the HoP to account for its complex operations and to build upon it to advance both peacebuilding analysis and practice, including perhaps beyond Maluku and Mindanao.

Religion, I argue, contributes to peacebuilding as it undergoes four complex inter-related processes through the HoP, which involves the interplay of four elements: (1) the belief that God[562] and sacred texts have a central position; (2) the dialogue between *external context*, *external values*, and *sacred text*; (3) the conviction in common and shared religious values; (4) the recognition of religion as a source of energy and motivation to organise concrete peacebuilding activities. In complex interrelated processes, religion can be approached as an interpretive community where religious adherents perceive peacebuilding as a sacred duty because they interpret sacred texts, doctrines, and narratives dynamically and inclusively, and according to external contexts and values, to create a durable peace. The HoP, moreover, contributes to concrete peacebuilding efforts by engaging flexibly and pluralistically through various social forces at three levels of leadership: grassroots, middle-range, and top-level leadership. Through the HoP, religion also plays a pivotal role in promoting peace locally, nationally, and internationally.

I divide this chapter into two parts. In the first part, I expound the complexity of the process of the HoP by discussing the four inter-related elements. By disaggregating the HoP in this manner, it becomes possible to understand it more fully and to consider the possibility of applying it in other cases. In the second part, I demonstrate that through the HoP, religion can flexibly play a crucial role in peacebuilding in all levels of society. This further helps to move beyond the secularist perspective to show that religion can work suitably with other efforts to advance peace.

[562] I use the concept of God refers to two Abrahamic religions, Islam and Christian, that employed in the two case studies. I am aware that not all religions, for example Buddhism, refer to the concept of God to describe "supreme being" or "the creator." See Cathy Cantwell, *Buddhism: The Basics* (Florence: Routledge, 2009), 42-46.

7.1 Religious Peacebuilders and the Process of the Hermeneutics of Peace

As I discussed Chapter 1, Scott Appleby's notion of the ambivalence of the sacred (AoS) and David Little's notion of the hermeneutics of peace (HoP) are useful theoretical approaches to reconsider the role of religion in conflict and peacebuilding that is undertaken in this thesis. In highlighting the ambivalent effects of religion, Appleby refused to perceive that religion could only be used to mobilise violent conflict and other forms of religious extremism. Appleby also highlighted that religion could be used for justice and peace. Furthermore, Appleby argued that religious leaders play pivotal roles in the AoS, in appealing to religion to invoke either "holy war" or "sacred peace."[563] That religious leaders are key players in determining religious and political perspectives and the actions of religious adherents is commonly accepted. However, this does not explain how and why religious leaders use religion to exert positive influence.

Little, in turn, offered the notion of the HoP to produce an argument that, I want to suggest, can be used to explain in detail how the AoS could be utilised to mobilize for peace. Through the HoP, Little emphasized the pivotal role of sacred texts, doctrines, and practices that could be used as moral justification and theological conviction to motivate religious followers to engage in peacebuilding activities as part of the sacred duty and religious vocation.[564] However, Little did not elaborate *how* sacred texts, doctrines, and practices are used and *how* the process of using them contributes to peace.

The two case studies of Maluku and Mindano help to further elucidate the HoP by showing how Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding. There is a need, though, to answer further analytical questions, such as how religious believers come to 'the conviction that the pursuit of justice and peace by peaceful means is a sacred priority',[565] and what types of processes religious adherents pursue as they use religion as a resource for peacebuilding.

I argue that the HoP is even more complex than Little's proposition. The HoP is a necessarily continuous process that involves inter-related elements. The process, in turn, determines whether religion could be used for peacebuilding and helps to describe the manners in which religious resources are used to contribute to peacebuilding.

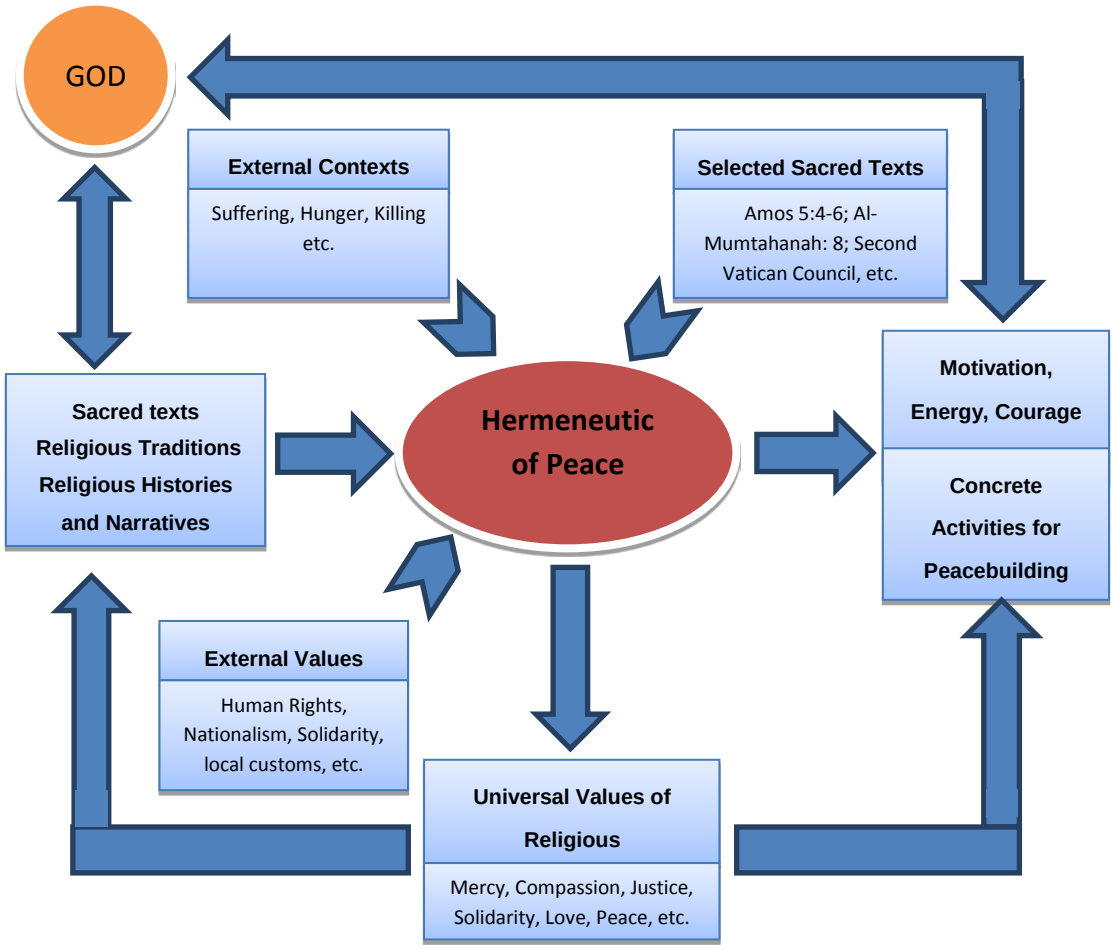
The flowchart below is one way to describe the complex operation of the HoP in the context of Maluku and Mindanao. It should be noted that illustrating the HoP as a flowchart does not mean that the HoP is a linear or mechanical process. Rather, it is a process that simultaneously and continuously involves inner emotional debate and spiritual struggle to discover a "truth" that cannot

[563] Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, 281 - 83.
[564] Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 438.
[565] Ibid.

be empirically observed. The aim of the flowchart, therefore, is only to simplify and evoke the HoP rather than to fully capture or describe it as a phenomenon.

In the chart, I subdivide the process of the HoP into four inter-related elements: the recognition of the central position of God and of the sacred texts of the monotheistic faiths that are considered in this thesis; the interaction between *external context*, *external values*, and *sacred text*; the conviction in shared and common religious values; and religion as a source of energy and motivation to organise concrete peacebuilding activities. The four elements are not hierarchically organised, and often operate simultaneously because the HoP principally operates as an intrapersonal psychological process.

Hermeneutics of Peace



7.1.1 Belief in Central Position of God and Sacred Texts

In broad alignment with the discourses on modern hermeneutics, a core issue of the HoP concerns the tripartite relationship of *author*, *text*, and *reader*.[566] However, the problematic of the HoP

[566] Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpetive Theory*, 3.

exceeds the complexity of the "normal" relationships between author, text, and reader because *God* is central and essential to any religious community. God is a primary source of inspiration and motivation that determines and directs the orientation of people's lives. Therefore, the notion of an absent, erased, or inconsequent author[567] does not apply in the context of Maluku and Mindanao. As I have shown in the two case-studies chapters, I found that religious peacebuilders in Maluku believe that God is "alive" and is "present" in the daily life of people to inspire, motivate, and orient them to working for peacebuilding. All my in-depth interviews with religious peacebuilders have demonstrated that faith in God played a critical role in shaping their decision and commitment to become involved actively in peacebuilding activities, and that God's blessing was the ultimate goal and orientation of all peace initiatives that they conducted.

In the HoP, the text is also an extraordinary one: a *sacred text* that corresponds to the words of God, representing God's presence and will in the world. The religious histories, narratives, and traditions, as practiced by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, or by Jesus Christ's disciples, are incorporated into sacred texts. (In Mindanao, the Vatican Council decisions take on a similar sacred quality). These texts are essential parts of the foundation of religiosity and spirituality in both Islam and Christianity. This is the case for Fr. D'Ambra (Silsilah Dialogue Movement) (SDM), Fr. Layson (Nalapaan Space for Peace), Ustadz Polpoke (the Council of Indonesian Ulama) (MUI), and Rev. Hendriks (the Protestant Church in Maluku) who gave the sacred texts a central place to theologically justify their engagement in peacebuilding. In short, God and God's words and sacred texts are crucial for religious peacebuilders in conducting their mission. Peacebuilding, in this context, is more than simply a tactic or strategy. Rather, peacebuilding is perceived as a holy duty or sacred mission.

The question remains, then, as to how and in what circumstances faith in God and the sacred texts become manners of personalizing and mobilising peace, to ensure that peace is perceived as an obligation that will provide reward and redemption, and as something that can be genuinely pursued. One cannot deny that, throughout human history, God and sacred texts have also been resources that people have used to support and sustain violence and gross violations of human rights.

One avenue for expanding understanding of how religion might consider a peacebuilding resource is to analyse how faith and sacred texts could be interpreted flexibly by accounting for social and political contexts. This is central to the second element that appears in the HoP flowchart above. The interaction process between external contexts, external values, and selected sacred texts provides one manner to explain how religious texts could be employed for peaceful purposes.

[567] See, for example, Duncan S Ferguson, *Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Atlanta, Gorgia: John Knox Press, 1986), 3 and 6.

7.1.2 "Continuous Dialogue": External Contexts, External Values, and Sacred Texts

Having learnt from the Maluku and Mindanao cases, I argue that religion is fundamentally public and thus never wholly private. Although the relationship of the individual with God in both Christianity and Islam receives considerable attention, it never stands alone. It always relates to other norms and values, and requires that believers interact with social forces. The complex process of the HoP operates in social, cultural, and political settings. In Maluku and Mindanao, I found that the interpretation of religion occurs always in response to public dynamics. I argue that the HoP, in this context, might be viewed as the continuous process of dialogue and communication between three elements: external contexts, external values, and sacred texts.

Firstly, *external contexts* in Maluku and Mindanao forced religious adherents to rethink and re-contextualize their understanding of religion to respond to crises and emergencies. The key factor is the devastating reality of the effects of "religious conflicts," including deaths, injuries, refugee flows, depression, and the destruction of physical and social infrastructure. My interviews with religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao showed that their involvement in various peacebuilding activities through both official and unofficial religious institutions was a religious moral response to the devastating effects of the conflict. Crisis, in other words, provoked religious adherents who were previously involved in conflict to change their theological and political positions to engage in peacebuilding as part of their moral and spiritual responsibility.

Secondly, *external values*[568] also substantially influence the HoP process. As I demonstrated in the Chapters 4, 5, and 6, religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao were extremely flexible in adopting and using "non-religious" values or "secular" norms and incorporating them into their religious understanding as part of their efforts to build sustainable peace. As I also elucidated in the previous chapters, religion worked in tandem with secular perspectives, such as human rights, local *adat* (customs), pluralism, feminism, nationalism, solidarity, and multiculturalism. The religious actors' flexibility in using those perspectives allowed them to broaden their perspectives on the issue of peacebuilding and gain greater support from non-religious communities.

Thirdly, together with the process of interpreting external contexts, and understanding and adopting external values, believers, as the readers of sacred texts, also became involved in selecting particular verses in sacred texts (the Bible and the Qur'an), and traditions within these religious narratives, that complied with and supported the idea of peacebuilding. As I discussed in previous

[568] I realise that it is difficult to claim that human rights, for example, are purely part of external values. Religion is involved, to a degree, in discussions and implementations of human rights as a global norm. In this context, external values can be defined as values that are largely or predominantly driven by non-religious discourses.

chapters, the sacred texts are a source of the ambivalence of religion. Believers could interpret and use some verses in the Gospels to foment war and violent conflict. Conversely, they could use some sacred texts and religious narratives to promote peace and harmony. The religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao reinterpreted and reread verses that people, in their view, had been previously misused to promote the use of violence. Meanwhile, the peacebuilders selected verses in the Holy Books that they could employ to theologically argue for and justify their engagement in the peacebuilding process.

The Maluku and Mindanao case studies also demonstrate the importance and ongoing reality of dialogue between external context, external values, and sacred texts. For example, immediately after his election as the Chairman of the GPM Synod and during the peak of religious conflict in Maluku, Rev. Hendriks began the HoP process by questioning how the GPM as the Church, both as the religious organisation and a sign of the Kingdom of God, understood the conflict. From there, he explored the possible resolutions in the specific situation (the external context) that he faced, which, at that time was a terrible condition, where thousands of people were killed, while another 100,000 were displaced because of the prolonged religious war. People also lived in villages were they were segregated based on their religion.[569]

Hendriks and his colleagues in the GPM Synod kept asking questions such as 'is it true that Jesus wants Christians to be involved in this religious war? Does God want the destruction of His own creations?'[570] The GPM utilised and interpreted specific verses in the Old Testament (e.g., Amos 5: 4-6) that emphasise the importance of defending life to justify their pursuit of theological reforms in the hope that they would empower the GPM network to become involved in peacebuilding.

The integration of external values, such as pluralism and multiculturalism, into the GPM's religious theology was part of the theological reforms. Another external value, which was used and influenced the process of the HoP within the GPM, consisted of using the local customs *(pela* and *gandong)* that were part of the ancestral beliefs to promotes peace, harmony, and mutual assistance among the *orang basodara* (brotherhood) across religious lines.

The history of Fr. Layson's involvement in the creation of Nalapaan Space for Peace in Pikit, Mindanao, also provided an illustration of the dialogue between external context, external values, and sacred texts in the HoP process. Layson started his HoP journey through dialogue between external factors, external values, and sacred texts. In 1997, after a group of Muslims assassinated his superior, the late Bishop Benjamin de Jesus, in Jolo, he wanted to stop working with the Muslim community. 'I developed hatred not only against the perpetrator of (the murder of) Bishop Ben, but

[569] Interview with Rev. I.W.J Hendriks, Ambon City, 14 January 2013.
[570] Ibid.

towards all Muslims,'[571] he wrote. He accepted to work in Pikit because he wanted to work and take care of Christians only. However, the external context, i.e., the crisis, "forced" him to engage in self-reflection to reconsider his religious mission in Pikit. Only 12 days after he arrived in Pikit, the Rajamuda war erupted. Thirty-thousand people were displaced from their villages. This forced him to rethink his religion and religiosity.[572] In my interview with Layson, he told me that the war in 1997 was his "second baptism."[573]

Moreover, because Nalapaan, which was the *barangay* that was most affected by war, is not the only village was populated by Muslims and Christians but is also a home for the Lumads (the indigenous people in Mindanao), Layson had to consider the external values that influenced the HoP process that he had undertaken. He found that the 1992 UN *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, which has been widely promoted throughout the world, advocated respecting the rights of minorities or indigenous people, and concluded that such rights should also be upheld in Mindanao.[574]

The continuous dialogue between external contexts and values led Layson to reread the sacred texts. Eventually, he found some religious texts[575] that obliged him, as a religious leader, to contribute to solve the problems that people faced on the ground, regardless of their religious affiliations. The reading of sacred texts in conjunction with external contexts and values led Layson to decide to do something concrete to overcome the bitter reality on the ground. For example, he strove to declare Nalapaan as a Space for Peace.

The third element of the HoP process, which is the belief in the universal values of religion, is the focus of the next section. This stage is crucial because it concerns the establishment of a moral standard, whether believing in God, understanding the external context and values, which specifically led to interpreting selected sacred texts, are truly inclusive and meet universal values that can be accepted by people across religious lines.

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[571] Fr. Roberto Layson, "Promoting Inter-Religious Dialogue in the Midst of Conflict and Violence," in *the 8th Franciscan Dialogue Program* (the Mother of Perpetual Help Shrine in Binoligan, Kidapawan CityJuly 5, 2008).
[572] Ibid.
[573] Interview with Fr. Roberto Layson, Colaman, 20 December 2012.
[574] Ibid.
[575] Ibid. Among verses in Bible that inspired and motivated him to engage in peacebuilding are Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth;" Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God;" John 20:21 "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you;" Romans 14:17 "The kingdom of God is not matter of food or drink; it lies in justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."; Mark 12:31 "You shall love your neighbour as yourself..."; Matthew 5:43 "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

7.1.3 Conviction of Common and Shared Religious Values

The third element of the HoP, the belief in common and shared religious values, such as mercy, compassion, justice, solidarity, love, and peace, is crucial in the HoP process because it becomes the moral ground and standard for the HoP process that transcends particular religious faiths. Most of the Muslim respondents in Maluku and Mindanao referred to the fundamental mission of Islam as being a religion that brings compassions and blessings not only for Muslims but also for humankind. Similarly, Protestants in Maluku and Catholic respondents in Mindanao often stated that the core mission of Jesus Christ on earth is to promote compassion, love, and peace.

The fact that the interpretation of religion is extremely subjective is commonly accepted. In fact, no one can claim that his or her interpretation of the sacred texts is the interpretation that captures most closely God's intended meaning. However, by establishing common and shared religious values as moral standards it becomes possible to judge subjectively whether a certain interpretation of sacred texts truly belongs to the HoP. In this manner, it becomes possible to judge that declaring and supporting holy wars, killings, torture, and spreading hatred and prejudices is not part of the HoP because doing so contradicts the common and shared religious values.

Throughout my fieldwork in Maluku and Mindanao, I also often listened to religious people who believed in those common and shared religious values. Those religious people were pious religious adherents: practicing religious rituals, believing in shared religious values, and in not harming others. However, the difference between religious peacebuilders and ordinary religious people is that the former use religious values as part of their convictions that are connected to the lengthy and deep processes of the HoP. While the "ordinary" religious people tended to use religion only as religious identity, religious peacebuilders tried to relate their understanding of religion to reach other religious communities. A common feature in both Mindanao and Maluku religious peacebuilders engaged in interfaith groups or inter-communal organisations where they could exercise deeper shared religious values. Moreover, because of the process of the HoP religious peacebuilders became more eager than ordinary religious people were to implement those shared religious values to ensure that they would become a concrete reality. In other words, concrete and transformative actions to solve problems on the ground are, thus, an additional and critical component of the HoP.

7.1.4 Sources of Energy and Motivation, and the Organisation of Peacebuilding Activities

The interplay between the belief on God, sacred texts, external contexts, external values, and the belief in the universal religious values in Maluku and Mindanao allowed religion to energise, motivate, and encourage believers to work assiduously for peace. Working in conflict zones is a

difficult task that often involves experiencing terror, including risking one's life. However, the lengthy and complex HoP process led the religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao to become deeply committed to peace.

Whereas Juergensmeyer, as I discussed in Chapter 2, coined the term "cosmic war" to describe the manner in which religion motivates people to wage holy wars, the cases that I discuss in this thesis show that religion can produces an apparently opposite outcome through the process of the HoP. I found that religious people in Maluku and Mindanao are the principal actors who organise around what might be called "cosmic peace," which I define as the process of attaining peace that is deeply rooted in religious motivations. My interviews and interactions with religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao led me to conclude that religious peacebuilders perceive peace as holy. In addition, they believe that working for peace is a sacred journey that not only furthers the short-term goal of establishing peace on earth but that it also has the long-term goal of attaining God's reward and redemption in the hereafter.

In other words, the HoP process does not end with the realization that religion promotes compassion, mercy, peace, love, and justice. For religious peacebuilders, the central position of God, the continuous dialogue between external context, external values, and selected sacred texts allowed believers to re-embrace the fundamental divine teachings that religion is for peace, mercy, love, and compassion. They become the point of departure to work seriously and tirelessly to materialize those principles into concrete actions and activities that bring peace on the ground.

To summarise, in this section, I developed further David Little's theory of the HoP by investigating how religious peacebuilders arrive at 'the conviction that the pursuit of justice and peace by peaceful means is a sacred priority.'[576] My analysis of the Maluku and Mindanao case studies demonstrates that religion could play a critical role in peacebuilding because it underwent the complex HoP's process, which I elaborated. Those processes generate belief, motivation, and energy in believers, leading them to become involved in fostering "cosmic peace," which is believed to be a sacred duty, through concrete and diverse peacebuilding approaches activities, and programmes that are based on the contexts within which they are implemented. In the following section, I discuss the immediate implication of the HoP process to demonstrate how religion or religious leaders contribute to peacebuilding flexibly and dynamically.

7.2 Religious Leadership in Peacebuilding

One of the critical lessons that can be taken from the complexity of the HoP process, is that the manner in which Muslims and Christians in Maluku and Mindanao use religious resources and

[576] Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 438.

contribute to peacebuilding is extremely dynamic and flexible. Whereas I have already discussed the capacity of religion to link with external forces and values, including local custom and feminism, a further dimension of this flexibility that becomes visible by comparing the case studies is the capacity to operate and, indeed, move across different levels of peacebuilding activities in society and politics.

John Paul Lederach, a prominent peacebuilding scholar-practitioner (a member of the Mennonites, a Christian group that promotes and practices pacifism) who closely engaged with religious matters,[577] argued that religious leaders could be placed among a range of others peacebuilding actors. Lederach illustrated his understanding as a pyramid of actors and approaches to peacebuilding (PAAP) which could be classified as three levels of leadership comprising specific and strategic tasks and approaches that could be executed to contribute to peacebuilding in an affected conflict population. According to Lederach, Level 1 of the PAAP corresponds to *top-level leadership*, which consists of the key political and military leaders in conflict. Level 2 corresponds to *middle-range leadership*, which comprises the key academic institutions and humanitarian organisations. Lederach explicitly mentions religious leader as part of this level of leadership. Level 3 represents grassroots *leadership*, which comprises members of indigenous non-governmental organisation, health officer, refugee camps leaders, and so on.[578]

However, the religious leaders making use of the HoP in Maluku and Mindanao do not fit neatly Lederach's model. I found that the position of religious leaders in peacebuilding was fluid and flexible and could not be confined to one particular level of leadership. Rather, they dynamically shifted from the grassroots to the middle-range and top levels of leadership, which Ledearch conceived as the PAAP. In other words, having learned about the extensive work that religious leaders conducted in Maluku and Mindanao, as I explained in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I can conclude that the positioning of religious leaders at the middle level risks obscuring the critical roles that they play at other levels.

Religious leaders in Maluku and Nalapaan (Pikit) can be placed in the grassroots leadership category, given that they are part of the community that conflict had affected and that they lived with and within the community and experienced the misery of the conflict. Religious leaders and lay people alike were victims of the religious conflict. However, at the grassroots level in both Maluku and Mindanao, religious leaders not only delivered spiritual and religious services but also provided humanitarian aid (e.g., food, medicines, and education). They played a critical role during the height of conflict.

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[577] In one of Lederach's seminal boosk, he often uses verses in Gospel to build his arguments on the importance of taking part of peacebuilding processes. See John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[578] *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconsilaiation in Divided Societies* 38-45.

Religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao also played a significant role in the middle range of leadership and, to this extent, my fieldwork does not contradict Lederach's PAAP model. The religious peacebuilders in both case studies conducted activities such organizing workshops and training in conflict resolution, organising peace commissioners, and leading insider-partial teams, which were part of the middle range of leadership in Lederach's approach to peacebuilding. The SDM in Mindanao, for example, organises formation programmes that could be perceived as conflict resolution training. Religious leaders in Nalapaan, before establishing the Space for Peace, conducted intensive training through the Culture of Peace and Interfaith Seminar, which included basic skills of conflict resolution. In Maluku, the Live-in Programmes that the GPM and LAIM organised, according to Lederach's criteria, fall into the middle-range leadership category. Activities such as Peace Sermons can also be included in this category.

In short, religious leaders are part of both the grassroots and middle-range levels of leadership. Religious leaders cannot fit into only one category of leadership, in the manner that Lederach's PAAP envisaged in his model. Rather, they move from one level of leadership to another. Furthermore, religious leaders can also play a role at the top-level of leadership—if one adopts the categories of Lederach's PAAP model—which comprises elites that engage in high-level peace negotiations. In the context of Maluku, religious leaders played a critical role in ending the conflict because they participated in intensive meetings to prepare for peace negotiations. In February 2002, in Malino, Muslim, Protestant, and Catholic leaders signed the Malino II Agreement that stopped the overall conflict. Similarly, Fr. Layson and the religious leaders in Pikit were involved in intensive negotiations with the high-ranking officials of the Armed Forced of the Philippines (AFP) and the central committee of the Mindanao Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) before they declared Barangay Nalapaan a Space for Peace.

To summarise, having learned from the Maluku and Mindanao experiences, religious leaders contributed to peacebuilding in extremely flexible and dynamic manners through the HoP process. Their role cannot be limited to a fixed category of leadership, in the manner that Lederach suggests. They are part of the grassroots, middle range, and top-levels of leadership, which involve assuming various approaches and conducting activities at each leadership level. As I mentioned, Lederach's PAAP is useful in identifying a range of people and programmes within each of the three levels of leadership that are involved in the process of peacebuilding. In reality, the illustration of the peacebuilding process as a pyramid comprising hierarchy and divisions does not fully reflect the reality on the ground. Whereas I cannot provide a specific "picture" or "drawing" as an alternative to Lederach's pyramid, I argue that conflict resolution scholars and practitioners, and especially religious peacebuilders, should not consider the peacebuilding process as linear; rather, they should view it as flexible and fluid.

In addition to the role of religious leaders in the three levels of leadership that were discussed above, the case of Maluku and Mindanao also demonstrated that religious peacebuilders could contribute to peacebuilding at local, national, and international levels. I found that in Maluku, for example, aside from the religious leaders' concrete work at the grassroots level, the religious leaders also played roles at the national level. Several meetings with ministers and with Presidents Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Soekarno-Putri were organised in both Jakarta and Maluku. The aim of those meetings was to identify possible solutions to the religious conflict, including urging the national government to take a decisive role in terminating the conflict.[579]

I found religious leaders could also influence the process of peacebuilding at the international level, in addition to their involvement in peacebuilding at local and national levels. Inter-religious leaders in Maluku established communication and contact with international communities during the conflict. In 2001, for example, Yusuf Ely (Muslim), Rev. Jacky Manuputty (Protestant), and Bishop Petrus Mandagi (Catholic) went to the French Parliament. In 2002, the same religious leaders and Mahfudz Nukuhehe, who is the Seith King and the Chairman of Latupati, on the Hitu Peninsula, attended the annual conference of the UN High Commission of Human Rights in Genève. From there, they went to the British and European Parliaments and to the European Council (Belgium). In the same year, 15 religious and *adat* leaders went to the British and European Parliaments.[580]

They conveyed at least two messages to every international meeting that they attended. First, they asked the international communities to urge the Indonesian government to take determined action to terminate the bloody conflict immediately. They believed that in an interconnected world, international pressure was critical in resolving the conflict, especially in exerting pressure on the Indonesian government to take responsibility in ending the conflict. After their visit to the European Parliament, for example, the Parliament released an extremely "strong statement" condemning the Indonesian government for being slow to address the conflict in Maluku and urging it to dissolve the religious civilian-military groups as an avenue for resolving the conflict.[581] Secondly, the religious leaders called on the international communities to provide humanitarian aid to the victims of the conflict. Since then, numerous international humanitarian relief agencies conducted their missions in Maluku. For example, after a meeting with the British government and Parliament in

[579] Interview with Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Ambon City, 10 January 2012.
[580] Ibid.
[581] Ibid.

London, the British government, created a special task force that was named the "Maluku Desk," which delivered aid in response to the religious leaders' recommendations.[582]

In Mindanao, Fr. Layson truly contributed to peacebuilding at the grassroots level by organizing salters for refugees and basic needs for the people who were affected by the wars in Pikit. However, he simultaneously played a considerable role in changing policies at the national level. During the height of the Buliok War in April 2003, President Arroyo went to Pikit and invited Layson to meet her. Layson used the opportunity to prove to the President that the war was not the solution. He presented and provided detailed data on the impact of the war. President Arroyo was extremely shocked and saddened to apprehend the reality on the ground because she did not receive such a report from her staff.[583]

Layson and some Pikit community leaders were also invited to meet the President at Malacanang Palace approximately one month after the meeting in Pikit. Layson also appeared on a national TV channel to urge the government to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Mindanao. Soon after the meeting, President Arroyo issued a directive to the national defence officials that they must consult with her first before taking any military action against the MILF.[584] In 2006, in Midsayap, Major General Pajarito, the commanding officer of 6ID in Awang, declared war against the MILF, thus violating the ceasefire agreement. Layson who had direct contact with Manila complained to the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) that the general had violated the ceasefire agreement. According to Layson, the OPAPP asked him if they could use his name in asking Malacanang to remove the general from his position. He agreed. Two days later the general was transferred to Zamboanga City.[585] This incident highlights that Layson, a grassroots leader, had considerable influence on defence policies at the national level.

Fr. D'Ambra, the founder of the Silslah Dialogue Movement (SDM), who was originally from Italy, had significant access to the international community especially in Europe. D'Ambra regularly travelled to Europe, especially to Italy, to raise awareness among the European public about the problems that the people of Mindanao faced. During his travels, D'Ambra was not only able to raise money to sustain the SDM programmes but also raised the awareness of Europeans about the importance of dialogue as a spiritual journey. A small core group in Italy has subscribed to and followed to the SDM's spiritual journey of dialogue within their Italian context. As I wrote in Chapter 6, the participants of the SDM formation programmes also came from various countries in the region, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.

[582] Ibid.
[583] Interview with Fr. Roberto Layson, Colaman, 20 December 2012.
[584] Ibid.
[585] Ibid.

The discussion in this section demonstrates that the HoP and the activities of religious peacebuilders can work together from the international to the local levels and back again to local level in powerful ways. As I elaborated in Chapter 6, D'Ambra's dialogue mission largely influenced the "global discourse" on the importance of dialogue, which was an outcome of the Second Vatican Council. D'Ambra brought and contextualized "the global discourse" for the local level in Mindanao, and subsequently used local experiences to influence the international community.

In short, the complex process of the HoP requires that religious peacebuilders in Maluku and Mindanao contextualise their religious understanding in relation to external contexts and values, as well in relation to other social forces that lead religious leaders to contribute to peacebuilding flexibly at local, national, and international levels. Religious leaders can be categorised as sub-state actors that influence peacebuilding at the local and national levels, but they also act as transnational actors who play an international role.

7.3 Conclusion

Drawing from the analysis of the Maluku and Mindanao cases, I argue that the HoP is a complex process that shows that religion is not necessarily absolutist, inflexible, and dogmatic. Religion can lead to the formation of interpretive communities that create new meanings through their interpretation of sacred texts in response to new social, cultural, and political developments. Arguably, religion is fundamentally public: it never operates in vacuum socio-cultural and political context.

The notion of the HoP is not a simple process. I have identified four elements of the HoP that produce interpretations of religion that favour peace and that could be used for peacebuilding. The first element is a belief in the central position of God and sacred texts, which interact with the second element, namely, the dialogue between external contexts (the negative effects of war and conflict), as well as the external values, such as human rights, pluralism, and local customs, that lead to selecting sacred texts. The process of dialogue between external contexts, external values, and selected sacred texts, leads to the third element of the HoP, namely, a conviction in shared and common religious values, such as compassion, love, peace, mercy, justice, and blessings for all humanity, which is used as for guidance and as a moral standard. These three elements in combination produce interpretations and theological justifications that favour peace and that can be utilised by religious actors to engage in peacebuilding. Finally, the HoP is not an abstract process. The HoP involves concrete and practical transformative actions that generate changes on the

ground. In this regard, religion, through the HoP, is a powerful source of energy, motivation, commitment, and courage that could be used to realise peacebuilding in a concrete manner.

In the second section, I discussed the immediate and practical implications of the complex process of the HoP. I considered Ledarach's PAAP model, which suggests that religious peacebuilders belong to the middle-range of leadership, to show that the case of Maluku and Mindanao reveals a different reality. Religious peacebuilders contribute to peacebuilding using various resources at the grassroots, middle range, and top levels of leadership, simultaneously. Furthermore, the Maluku and Mindanao case studies revealed that religious peacebuilders acted dynamically to contribute to peacebuilding at the local, national, and international levels.

Overall, the complex processes of the HoP could provide a framework for understanding the role of religious peacebuilders beyond the Maluku and Mindanao cases. The focus on the four interrelated processes that has been discussed here might provide a useful guide for engaging religion in the process of peacebuilding in other parts of the world. Through an inclusive process of the HoP, religion could contribute to peacebuilding in dynamic, fluid, and pluralistic manners. Avoiding an exclusive process of rereading sacred texts could allow religious people to work for the holy mission of peacebuilding at the grassroots, middle range, and top levels of leadership. Moreover, through the HoP, religion could contribute to peacebuilding at the local, national, and international levels.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

This thesis contributes to a relatively new body of research that is developing arguments about the role that religion can play in peacebuilding. To do so, I have adopted a critical orientation to the tendency in mainstream research in international relations (IR) and conflict resolution and peace studies (PCRS) to ignore religion in their analyses. In Chapter 1, I laid the foundation for this thesis by discussing the issues relating to Southeast Asia and forming my research question: How do Muslims and Christians use religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies in Southeast Asia, with particular reference to the conflicts in Maluku, Indonesia, and Mindanao, the Philippines? Asking this question is necessary, given that the secular paradigm dominates the social sciences, including the fields of IR and PCRS, in which religion is perceived as irrational (even metaphysical and superstitious), rigid, dogmatic, inflexible, regressive, and incompatible with development and modernisation. Worse, religion has been cast, by some, as a principal source of terrorism, extremism, and fundamentalism, violent conflict, and gross human rights violations.

Although critical of the influence of the secular paradigm, I do not deny that religion does contribute to conflict. We should not ignore the fact that the suicide bombers who attacked the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, for instance, were religious, and that they used religious understandings to motivate and justify their cruel and inhumane actions. I also do not adopt the stance, sometimes taken by religious people, of simply claiming that those who mobilise religion for violence are not fully or authentically religious, or that they did not really understand religion. Finally, whereas my focus is on the role of religion in peacebuilding, it is not possible to fully separate religious motives from economic and political interests in the conflicts of Mindanao and Maluku. Other researchers contribute crucial analyses on these factors, and whereas, as I argued in my literature review, some analyses are problematic for the manner in which they cast religion as fully instrumentalised in the service of economic and political interests, the traditional political economy arguments do contribute powerful analyses.

In this thesis, I have approached religion as a “normal” socio-political phenomenon. The notion that religion is “normal” originates from an understanding that religion is not exceptional, vis-à-vis secularism, in its relationship with violence. I can, crudely and, yet, with some justification, claim that secular actors have been at least as problematic as religious ones in igniting conflicts and violence, and in generating gross human rights violations. Scott Appleby’s notion of

the ambivalence of the sacred (AoS) helps to develop further my assumption of the neutrality or normality of religion. For Appleby, religion has two faces: one positive and one negative. Religion, throughout human history, has facilitated normatively ambiguous actions: it can be utilised to justify violent conflict and, conversely, it can be utilized to mobilise support for peacebuilding. In the thesis, I used the concept of the ambivalence of the sacred as a point of departure to explore the role of religion in peacebuilding the two "religious conflicts" of Maluku and Mindanao.

In conducting fieldwork in Maluku and Mindanao, I found that the significant role that religion plays in peacebuilding could not be ignored. In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I demonstrated that religion and religious actors played pivotal roles in peacebuilding. Informed by David Little's notion of the hermeneutics of peace (HoP), my findings challenge the assumptions that are commonly held within the secular paradigm, which positions religion as irrational, monolithic, inflexible, rigid, dogmatic, and with a propensity towards violence. I argued that religion significantly contributed to peacebuilding through the HoP; I also outlined how the religious resources that were used to contribute to peacebuilding were extremely flexible, varied, and pluralistic.

In Chapter 3, I showed how religion, which had previously played roles in the conflict in Maluku, became a pivotal agent for peace. In this context, I discovered the different manners in which Christian and Muslim official religious organisations contributed to peacebuilding. In the Christian community, the Protestant Church of Maluku (GPM) played a critical role of initiating peacebuilding as a well-organised and recognised local church. The GPM used its religious and moral authority, structure, and networks to conduct theological reform, reformulate church theology in the context of the peacebuilding effort during the conflict and post-conflict periods, and empower Christians to become involved in peacebuilding. The GPM Synod not only developed theological justifications for peacebuilding but also became involved in operationalising them into practical activities on the ground. In contrast, the Muslim community, which did not have a similar tradition of having a single, strong, and hierarchical religious organisations, developed different processes to become involved in peacebuilding. Alliances of courageous, charismatic, and respected leaders from official Muslim organisations, namely, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), and *Muhammadiyah*, engaged in rereading and contextualising the understanding of the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the history in Islam. They used these understandings as religious arguments to convince Muslims at the grassroots level that terminating the conflict was in accordance with Islamic teaching. Notwithstanding some limitations concerning their religious and moral authority and funding, Muslim organisations were practically involved in peacebuilding activities, for example, by establishing a School for Reconciliation.

The unofficial religious institutions in Maluku, which I discussed in Chapter 4, contributed to peacebuilding in flexible and pluralistic manners. Whereas official religious organisations tended to use formal approaches to engage in peacebuilding, for example, by using religious structures and charismatic leadership in theological exegesis and reinterpreting sacred texts through a HoP, the unofficial organisations tended to operate more informally. The three micro-cases of unofficial religious institutions that I explored in Chapter 4, namely the Maluku Interfaith Foundation (LAIM), the Concerned Women Movement-GPP, and the cases of two peaceful villages (Seith and Wayame), show that religion can be part of peacebuilding through different channels (interfaith organisations, women's movements, and building peace at the community level). Moreover, the three micro-cases demonstrated that religion had the flexibility and ability to adopt and adapt to non-religious resources in peacebuilding efforts. LAIM, for example, aside from using an inclusive theology as a platform for their interfaith dialogue mission, also used approaches and techniques that were commonly used by secular non-government organisations, such as participatory and bottom up approaches. The interplay between inclusive theology and the secular approaches allowed LAIM to reach a larger number of interfaith stakeholders in interfaith dialogue. Traditional and non-religious perspectives such as *pela-gandong*, feminism, and nationalism were also utilised in peacebuilding in the cases of the GPP, Seith, and Wayame.

Four decades of intractable conflict in Mindanao involved Christians and Muslims at the grassroots level enduring mutual distrust, animosity, prejudices, and stigmas. Meanwhile, the peace process that the government and rebels had initiated only produced intermittent peace. These phenomena led religious leaders in Mindanao to take concrete steps to build "peace from below." The first of the two micro-cases that was examined in this thesis was the Mindanao case study, involving the Silsilah Dialogue Movement (SDM) and Nalapaan Space for Peace, which demonstrated the significant role that religious leaders and institutions played in initiating peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Religious understandings, such as the teachings of *Lumen Gentium* and *Nostra Aetate* from the Second Vatican Council, informed the peace activists in Mindanao who initiated interfaith dialogue as an avenue to establish durable peace.

Religion has inspired and motivated SDM activists since the establishment of the organisation Mindanao. Furthermore, grounded in religious traditions, SDM broadened the meaning of dialogue beyond the formal dialogue approaches that were commonly practiced in conflict resolution. The SDM programmes have helped foster personal transformation among the participants, especially for rebuilding trust among Christians and Muslims, and by eradicating prejudices that have been transmitted from generation to generation since the colonial period. The second micro-case, the Nalapaan Space for Peace, demonstrated that peace could be established in Mindanao among the devastation of wars that produced frustration and pessimism. The Catholic Church in Pikit,

Cotabato, instilled a hope that peace was not illusive, but real and possible. Through multiple internal and external dialogues, the people in Nalapaan, a *barangay* (village) that was gravely affected by war, declared a Space for Peace. Internal dialogue, such as their Culture of Peace and Inter-faith Seminar initiatives, allowed the people of Nalapaan to become engaged in the HoP where they found how their own religious traditions and the traditions of the others could be used as a common ground to build peace in their *barangay*. Through external dialogue (communication and negotiation with the government and the MILF), the people of Nalapaan, the *Tri People* (Christians, Muslims, and Lumads), gained support from the combatants to respect their decision to declare their *barangay* a Space for Peace.

In the last micro-case, I argued that religion could also operate to instil peace in a rebel military organisation, the MILF. My research with sympathizers, as well as regular members of the MILF, during fieldwork demonstrated that the peace process that the MILF leaders are currently undertaking with the Philippines government is not merely a political strategy. More than that, the peace process is grounded in theological decisions that are based on their understanding of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's traditions (*Hadith*). The case of the MILF, again, demonstrated that the process of the HoP occurred even among those in the liberation front, where the MILF tried to find justification in religious traditions to solve the problems in Mindanao through peaceful means.

Aside from using the HoP as my theoretical framework, the fieldwork in Maluku and Mindanao allowed me to advance the HoP theory to understand the role of religion in peacebuilding in more nuanced fashion. As I discussed in Chapter 7, I discovered that religious adherents in Maluku and Mindanao were not as dogmatic and rigid as commonly assumed. They belonged to interpretive communities that are often vibrant, dynamic, pluralistic, and open to the creation of new meanings and understandings of religion that could be used as moral arguments to drive the conduct of concrete actions for peacebuilding. The HoP was a continuous process that began, in the monotheistic faiths that are considered in this thesis, with a strong belief in the central role of God and the sacred texts, be they the Gospel, the Qur'an, the *Hadith*, religious narratives and histories, or the documents of Second Vatican Council. The HoP, then, involved interaction between external contexts, such as suffering, injustices, displaced persons, orphans, "external values and norms," (i.e., secular norms such as human rights, feminism, humanism, and nationalism), and traditional values, such as *pela-gandong*. The interchange between external contexts and external norms influenced the manner in which people interpreted and constructed sacred texts. The HoP also mobilised some of the universal values of religion, such as mercy, compassion, justice, love, and peace, as moral guidance and standards in the HoP process. Overall, the HoP process produced motivation, energy, and courage to engage in peacebuilding in practical manners. Religious actors

believed that their engagement in peacebuilding was part of their religious convictions and that such service would result in redemption and rewards on Judgment Day. Because they also believed that their involvement in peacebuilding was part of spirituality and sacred duty, the religious people in Maluku and Mindanao were extremely strong in their peacebuilding convictions. Because peace was viewed as sacred, some were even ready to sacrifice themselves in this holy mission.

As all other research, of course, this research has limitations. Maluku and Mindanao are extremely complex and diverse regions. Within the limited time and resources that I had to complete this thesis, my research was limited to Ambon Island in Maluku, consisting of Ambon City and a small part of Central Maluku. Because the conflict did not occur only on Ambon Island, future research might be extended to other areas of Maluku, such as villages in municipalities that are distant from the "epicentre" of the conflict. Furthermore, , comparative studies on Maluku and North Maluku (the religious conflict first occurred in Maluku then spread to North Maluku) should be conducted to acquire a superior understanding of religious peacebuilders. This comparison would be interesting because the two neighbouring provinces have different social, cultural, and religious structures. The people in North Maluku, for example, do not have the customary *pela-gandong* system. Furthermore, the largest official Christian organisation is a Protestant congregation called *Gereja Masehi Injil Halmahera* (GMIH). This fact raises the question, for example, as to what similarities and dissimilarities exist between GMIH and GPM in using religious resources to contribute to peacebuilding. With the absence of the *pela gandong* system in North Maluku, one might also investigate the non-religious resources that GMIH could use to contribute to peacebuilding.

As I mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3, Mindanao has numerous extremely vibrant civil society organisations (CSOs), including the CSOs that religious leaders lead, and both local and international organisations. The three micro-cases that I presented in Chapter 6 could be enriched by providing greater amounts of data on how religion contributes to peacebuilding in different religious institutions, and with different leadership in other parts of Mindanao that have specific local problems. The Nalapaan Space for Peace, for example, was only one of numerous Spaces for Peace or Peace Zones in Mindanao. The SDM is also only one of numerous interfaith initiatives that exist in Mindanao. Many other religious leaders and organisations could be interviewed to understand religious peacebuilders in Mindanao.

The two case studies that I have employed in this research also cannot be taken to represent the entire phenomenon of peacebuilding in Southeast Asia, given that the region is extremely diverse with different political systems, cultures, languages, and religious affiliations. In addition, the case studies of Maluku and Mindanao that I have chosen for this thesis only presented religious peacebuilders in two Abrahamic traditions: Christianity and Islam. The research on religious

peacebuilders in Southeast Asia might be developed further by employing case studies involving the role of non-Abrahamic religions, such as that played by Buddhism in peacebuilding in the long-standing conflict in Southern Thailand or in Burma, where Buddhists are the majority.

Aside from the foregoing limitations, the fieldwork that I conducted in Maluku and Mindanao, and its presentation and analysis in this thesis make is possible to conclude that ignoring religion in peace and conflict analyses leads scholars to draw erroneous conclusions. Moreover, the influence of the secular paradigm can lead scholars draw conclusions that do not help to address conflict situations. As the notion of the ambivalence of the sacred implies, religion relates not only to war and conflict but also to peace. The cases of Maluku and Mindanao provide ample evidence that religion played critical roles in the process of peacebuilding. The two case studies demonstrate that religion is not dogmatic, static, or conservative. Through the process of the HoP, the religious communities in Maluku and Mindanao were extremely dynamic and flexible in interpreting and using their Holy Books and religious narratives and traditions to form the moral foundations that would enable them to work tirelessly for peace. There is little doubt, then, that the pursuit of sustainable peace in the two religions could benefit from further efforts to understand and draw upon religion as a valuable resource for peacebuilding.

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List of Interviews[586]

Quoted Interviewees, Maluku (Total Interviewees: 35)

Attamimi, Mohammad. Ambon City, 28 July 2011. He is Head of the Department of Religious Affairs in Maluku.

Ely, Tamrin. Ambon City, 5 August 2011. He was a Muslim leader who attended the Malino II Peace Agreement.

Hatarie, Abraham. Ambon, 14 January 2013. He is Coordinator of Bureau for Publication and Documentation of the GPM Synod.

Hataul, Mahfudz. Seith, 24 July 2011. He is one of the respected elders in Seith.

Hendriks, Izaac Willem Josias (I.W.J.). Ambon City, 11 July 2011, 14 January 2013 and 15 January 2013. He was the Chairman of the GPM Synod from 2001 to 2005.

Hendriks, Margaretha. Ambon City, 12 July 2011 and 15 January 2013. She was co-chair of the *Gerakan Perempuan Peduli* (GPP), representing Protestants.

Hidayat, Syarif. Ambon City, 27 July 2011. He is Secretary General of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) in Maluku.

Latuconsina, Zuliana. Ambon City, 2 August 2011. She was one of the Muslim leaders in the GPP. She is also sister of the Governor of Maluku at that time.

Luhulima, Abdurrahman. Liang, 31 July 2011. He is secretary of Liang (a Muslim village).

Mailoa, Novadyette. Ambon City, 27 July 2011. She is currently a pastor at UKIM.

Mandagi, Petrus. Ambon City, 18 July 2011. He is the Bishop of Diocese of Amboina.

Manggala, Irwan Tahir. Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He is a Muslim youth leader in Jalan Baru area.

Manuputty, Jacky. Ambon City 7 July 2011, 2 August 2011 and 10 January 2012. He is currently the Chairman of the Department of Research and Development of GPM and is the former executive director of LAIM.

Musanef, Imam. Wayame, 15 July 2011. He is a Muslim leader in Wayame.

Pesiwarisa, Hengki. Ambon City, 20 July 2011. He is the head pastor of Silo Church.

Polpoke, Abdul Wahab, Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He was co-Chairman of the MUI in Maluku during the conflict.

Polpoke, Abdul Wahab. Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He is senior Muslim leaders and was formal Co-Chairman of MUI during the conflict.

Rahawarin, Natsir. Ambon City, 15 July 2011. He is former Secretary General of BIMM.

Renyaan, Brigitta. Ambon City, 14 July 2011. She was Co-Chair of the GPP (Catholic).

Ruhulessin, John. Ambon City 12 July 2011. He is the Chairman of the GPM Synod from 2005 to 2015.

Ruhulessin, John. Ambon City, 12 July 2011. He is the Chairman of the Synod of the GPM.

Sahalessi, John. Wayame, 15 July 2011. He is a former pastor at Pniel Church, which is located in Wayame.

Tala, Yusuf. Seith, 24 July 2011. He is Youth Coordinator of Seith.

Talakua, Lenny. Ambon City, 10 January 2012. She is a pastor at Rohoboth Church.

Tapilatu, M. Ambon City, 16 July 2011. He is senior lecture in *Universitas Kristen Maluku (UKIM)*. He teaches, among other things, the history of the GPM.

Tatuhey, Idrus. Ambon City, 18 July 2011. He is former Chairman of Muhammadiyah in Maluku and of the signatory of Malino II Agreement.

Tukan, Idrus. Ambon City, 19 July 2011. He is the Chairman of the MUI in Maluku.

Wakano, Abidin. Ambon City, 8 July 2011. He is current executive director of LAIM.

Quoted Interviewees, Mindanao (Total Interviewees 43)

Aiyub, Alih S. Zamboanga City, 28 November 2011. He is Secretary of National Ulama Council of the Philippines (NUCP) in ZamBaSulTa (Zambonga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi). He is also actively involved in the SDM.

[586] Quoted interviewees are listed here. Other interviews that were conducted during fieldwork are relied upon, along with participant-observation, for general and background information.

Andik, Kadtong T. Nalapaan, 8 December 2011. He is a Muslim inhabitant in Nalapaan. He is also a volunteer of Bantay Ceasefire, an independent ceasefire network established by civil society groups in Mindanao.

Cassanova, Sanggulin M. Nalapaan, 8 December 2011. He is a Muslim community leader in Nalapaan.

Commander Sabre, Pikit, 9 December 2011. He is commander of 108th Based Command of Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces.

D'Ambra, Sebastiano. Zamboanga City, 21 November 2011 and 24 November 2011

de Compo, Esther. Zamboanga City, 27 November 2011. She is alumna of the SDM's formation programme.

Emmanuel, Jovie. Zamboanga City, 30 November 2011. She is Coordinator of the SDM Formation/Training Programme.

Gamboa, Gerardo. Pikit, 9 December 2011. Toto is Peace Education Officer of Immaculate Conception Parish and the President of Parish Pastoral Council (1997–2001).

Iligan, KGWD. Romeo P. Nalapaan, 9 December 2011. He is a Catholic community leader in Nalapaan.

Iqbal, Mohagher. Cotabato City, 12 December 2011. He is the Chairman of the MILF Peace Panel.

Layson, Roberto C. Colaman, 20 December 2012.

Macapuji, Rowena J. Zamboanga City, 27 November 2011. She is Coordinator of Midwives Programme, in the Silsilah Center in Lower Calarian.

Pinol, Emmanuel. Kidapawan City, 20 December 2012. He is the former Governor of Cotabato, one of the petitioners to the Supreme Court to oppose the MOA-AD.

Sano, Aminda E. Zamboanga City, 28 November 2011. She is currently President of the SDM and one of the founders of the EDC.

Sayarsan, Ramoz D. Nalapaan, 8 December 2011, He is a leader of Lumad in Nalapaan.

Tibungcog, Abdul D. Nalapaan, 8 December 2011. He is Chief of Nalapaan village.

UY, Susan R. Pikit, 12 December 2011. She is a senior staff of Municipal Agriculture Department of Pikit.